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New Statesman

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GOODBYE TO THE SIXTH

Heroin addicts ● Reagan's 'Cuba crisis' ●
Reign of terror: Jim McGuigan on the Arts Council

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New Statesman

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Freedom of Information Policies for Information Age Professions in 1984

A free national one-day conference

29 February, 10 am-4 pm

Birmingham and Midland Institute Conference Centre
Margaret Street, Birmingham

Prof. James Cornford: Director, Nuffield Foundation – *'The political and social basis for any FoI programme, barriers or gateways?'*

Joe Kenney: Chairman, British Computing Society Privacy Committee – *'I.T. usage and abusage'*

Patrick Conway: Past President, Association of Assistant Librarians – *'Information services as social services'*

John Martyn: Policy Research Consultant, Aslib – *'Information as a commodity'*

Final motion for debate: *'In the age of the welfare society, welfare services are an individual's fundamentally democratic right; hence, in the age of information technology, information services are an individual's fundamentally democratic right'*

Names of people wishing to attend the conference, plus employer's or institution's name, beforehand to: **Peter Keelan, The Library, University of Wales Institute of Science and Technology, P.O. Box 94, Cardiff, Wales (Tel: 0222 42489).**

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New Statesman Vol 107 No 2755 6 January 1984

Nigeria's latest coup

IT IS TYPICAL of the almost total lack of understanding of the Third World in this country and the United States that comment on the latest military coup in Nigeria should have been dominated by two themes – first, that what has happened is 'a tragedy for democracy'; second, relief that the new regime has honoured its first due debt repayment to international banks.

A crass blindness to the realities and needs of developing countries has created the view that Western-style parliamentary elections are the only way in which a country can establish that its government legitimately represents the will of its people. By extension any such election, no matter the circumstances under which it is conducted or the results it produces, is taken as proof of legitimacy. To placate this view, regimes the world over have been pressured by successive US administrations into staging 'democratic elections' to satisfy a simplistic American domestic opinion that political, financial and military support is justified.

Thus the re-election of President Shagari in Nigeria last summer for a second term was hailed as a 'triumph for democracy', particularly to be welcomed for the fact that Nigeria is by far the most populous and economically powerful country in Black Africa. It was, of course, nothing of the kind, as we reported at the time (see *NS* 2 September 1983). President Shagari had already demonstrated a patent inability to cope with the complex problems of governing Nigeria. He achieved his second election victory by widespread electoral fraud. Many of his post-election nominees to important positions were men with existing convictions for fraud.

The unhappy conclusion is not that the military in Nigeria has once again overthrown a legitimate and viable civilian government, but that civilian government failed to take roots between 1979 and 1983, or to show a capacity to govern a country fundamentally divided between the Muslim North, the Yoruba West and the Ibo East. The same fate befell the first civilian government of independent Nigeria under Sir Abubaker Tafawa Balewa.

The new regime in Lagos is a repetition of the one that overthrew General Gowan's government in 1975 and then prepared for the return of civilian government in 1979. It is a 'northern' coup, led by many of the same group of rather austere Muslim soldiers that tried to clean up corruption and restore discipline before. The new chairman of the Supreme Military Council, General Buhari, was a State governor and then oil minister under that regime. As an institution, the Nigerian army seems to maintain a surprising degree of national cohesion, except for the weakness that since the Biafran war there are almost no Ibos in senior positions.

Any Nigerian government's main immediate problem, though, is coping with the consequences of the fact that the industrial economies of the world have, by following catastrophic policies, kept the world in a deep and prolonged recession. The consequent oil glut and collapse in the oil price has caught Nigeria (and others like Mexico) in the middle of an ambitious and expensive development plan – in which it was actively encouraged until things went wrong by Western advice, Western banks and Western business interests. The wider lesson of the economic crisis facing Nigeria is that developing countries need a new policy of co-ordinated economic expansion by the industrial economies of the world even more desperately than they need it themselves.

Knight starvation

EVERYONE KNOWS about the pro-Tory bias amongst Fleet Street proprietors. The majority of them have done their level best over the years for commercial, political and social reasons to keep out Labour governments. And for their pains they have got knighthoods, peerages, North Sea oil licences and invitations to No. 10 in return. Everyone knows that it is not a healthy or proper kind of ownership for a national press in a modern democracy. Some day, via the firm application of monopoly law and the spread of *Guardian*-type trusts, things may change.

At a working level, however, there has until now been a convention that journalists themselves should avoid becoming enmeshed in the ridiculous British honours system – at least until they retired to El Vino-super-Mare. The convention was based on the view that, for want of some honour courtesy of No. 10, journalists should not modify what they wrote or said. Applying the stronger Calpurnian test, the convention held that proper journalists should be above even the suspicion that thought of honour influenced them.

It was a good convention, but now one increasingly honoured in the breach. We have had Sir Larry Lamb and are presumably supposed to believe that his knighthood had nothing to do with the *Sun*'s strong anti-union, pro-Thatcher line. We have Sir David English and are supposed to believe that the *Daily Mail* is journalistically objective (though even its staff were moved to complain about bias during the last election campaign).

Now the unhealthy trend is spreading to the more powerful end of the media spectrum – television. Mrs Thatcher, more than any of her predecessors, has made it clear that there are interviewers she likes and interviewers she does not like. She has used her implicit power of veto on more than one occasion to insist on particular forms of programme. Since current affairs on television is now such a critical part of the democratic process, it must leave an unpleasant taste in the mouth to know that she personally must have approved of the knighthood for Sir Alastair Burnet, just as three years ago she dished out one to Sir Robin Day.

Of course national journalists must have regular working contact with the establishment. They could not do their job otherwise. But that is different from becoming part of that establishment. A good story or a good interview ought to be sufficient for a working journalist. These other baubles are professionally ludicrous.

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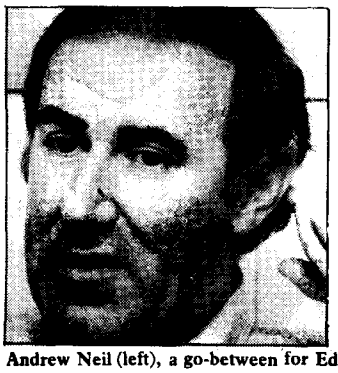
Sunday Times editor plays politics



Andrew Neil (left), a go-between for Eddie Shah (right)

ANDREW NEIL, the new editor of the *Sunday Times*, secretly gave private help to Mr Eddie Shah in his dispute with the National Graphical Association. This included telephoning Leon Brittan, the home secretary, twice at the height of picketing, to seek greater police support for Shah's Warrington presses, where his Stockport Messenger group of newspapers is printed.

Neil first contacted Shah in November to declare support for his stand. After that the two men spoke a number of times by telephone. One of Shah's calls to Neil on the evening of Tuesday 29 November, at the height of mass picketing, formed the basis of Neil's statement in the *ST*'s editorial on 4 December that 'at midnight last Tuesday, when the mob looked like breaching police lines and his factory gate, Mr Shah thought it was all over and that he and his workforce would be lucky to escape with their lives.'

However, Neil's involvement was not principally that of a senior journalist attempting to keep abreast of events. At the time he told none of his staff working on the Warrington story about his talks with Shah. Instead he told the home secretary, Leon Brittan. Neil urged Brittan to instruct the local police to strengthen their presence at Warrington.

Initially Brittan demurred. But at the cabinet meeting on Thursday 1 December – the first presided over by Mrs Thatcher following the Commonwealth conference in Delhi – the prime minister inquired about the progress of the dispute. As a result of the cabinet discussion, Brittan agreed to accept personal responsibility for ensuring sufficient police resources to help Shah. This decision was reported back to Neil, and on to Shah, within hours.

The *ST*'s team of journalists, preparing a 4,000 word reconstruction of the Shah-NGA saga knew none of this as they wrote their report on the Friday evening and Saturday morning. Only on Saturday afternoon, after the story had been written, did Neil disclose his role to Don Berry, managing editor of features, and Peter Gillman, the reporter who had spent most of the previous two weeks in Warrington, oblivious of his editor's actions.

A new final paragraph to the *ST*'s story, recording the result of the cabinet meeting (but not what had led up to it) was hurriedly written. Subsequently Gillman resigned as a staff writer.

Neil's vigorous attempt to help Shah fight the NGA sits oddly with his behaviour over the editorial in that weekend's *ST*. Under the headline 'A battle for Britain', it contained a strong defence of Shah. After the first edition appeared, a group of senior NGA members at the *ST* warned Neil there might be problems completing that night's print run if Neil persisted in running the editorial unaltered. Neil agreed to various changes:

- Opening paragraph, first edition: 'If decent and industrious entrepreneurs *such as Mr Eddie Shah* cannot survive and prosper . . .'
  Final edition: 'If decent and industrious entrepreneurs cannot survive and proper . . .'
- First edition: '. . . But it was ever thus on Fleet Street, which is why the *likes of the NGA* still hold the whip hand . . .'
  Final edition: '. . . which is why the unions still hold the whip hand . . .'
- First edition: '. . . Mr Kinnock wants to give Labour a spruced-up, high-tech image. Yet his party supports a *Luddite* union which . . .'
  Final edition: '. . . Yet his party supports a union which . . .'
- End of editorial, first edition: 'Their industry and the country have been diminished, as a result. But the logic is irresistible. It has taken Mr Shah to remind us.'
  Final edition: last sentence omitted.

Peter Kellner

See also Peter Kellner on page 7

Unions hold Devon roads together

DEVON County Council has been forced into an embarassing retreat over its plans to put road maintenance out to private tender in two out of the County's ten road divisions.

In a surprise move councillors sitting on the Tory-controlled Policy Committee recommended that the whole plan be abandoned. The decision came only a few weeks before a financial appraisal of the scheme was due to be published for the full council. The figures are reliably thought to have shown that the experiment was going to cost at least £1 million to operate in the first year.

Credit for the council's change of heart goes to an alliance of five trade unions (NALGO, NUPE, TGWU, G&M and UCATT) representing employees from the road crews to the divisional surveyors. They voted not to co-operate with the construction giant Tarmac, which had been picked to take over all road work in the Ottery and Tiverton areas for an 18 month experimental period.

The scheme, which was first mooted in July, caused an immediate controversy when it was learnt that no other contractors had been approached, and that discussions with Tarmac had reached an advanced stage before councillors knew anything about the scheme.

Under the terms of the original plan, Tarmac was invited to employ the people it wanted from the council's own Direct Labour Organisation. Anyone who wasn't offered work would then be redeployed to other parts of the county and there would be no redundancies. But with the unions acting in concert to oppose the scheme, no-one took up the offer of work with the private contractor, and the council was faced with an enormous bill for having to keep employees on its pay-roll.

Devon's Chief Executive, David Macklin, who is regarded by many as one of the principal architects of the scheme, reported to the Policy Committee last month that 'if an insufficient number accept Tarmac's offer of employment, the council could not afford to maintain employment of the remainder over the following 18 months, and they would need to consider whether to abandon the proposed experiment or to make redundant all staff who are not to be employed by Tarmac'.

And Mr Macklin duly recommended that his officers 'be authorised to pursue the appropriate statutory procedures relating to a potential redundancy situation'.

Labour and Liberal councillors were than caught completely off guard when the leader of the council, Arnold Sayers (who's also Chairman of the Association of County Councils' Policy and Resources Committee) recommended the dropping of the proposals. Mr Sayers said that the costs of the experiment would be too high.

The Area Organiser for NUPE, Ian Ducat, said the solidarity of the five unions had meant the council couldn't go ahead with the proposals. But for NALGO and NUPE the end of one battle heralds the beginning of another. At the same meeting of the Policy Committee it was agreed in principle to scrap the Planning, Architects' and Estate Surveyors' Departments with the loss of about 100 jobs. Significantly Devon would then be the first council in the country not to have a Planning Department, but instead would have a Department of Property Management.

Mark Cannan

Backlash against the Irish

WHEN BBC Radio's *Melodies for You* played 'The Mountains of Morne' the day after the Harrods bombing, one hundred listeners rang up to protest against the broadcasting of Irish music. This well-publicised reaction evidently contributed to a mood of extreme caution at Channel Four over any references to Ireland during the Christmas period.

The week before Christmas, Channel Four's *Right to Reply* programme considered setting up a studio confrontation between Sinn Fein's Gerry Adams and *World in Action's* John Ware. Ware had produced a programme, broadcast on 19 December, which claimed to demonstrate Adams's Provisional IRA connections. Adams claimed, before the broadcast, that Ware had 'stitched him up' and misrepresented him. The *Right to Reply* team thought that Adams's claim ought to be pursued. In the aftermath of the bombing it was decided no such programme could be screened, thus forestalling a major political row in which the channel would undoubtedly have faced accusations of treason.

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Two other programmes – both comedy shows – were actually censored in anticipation of public protests. One of these was in Channel Four's 'Comedy Classics' slot, broadcast on 27 December. A 1961 rerun of *Saturday Night at the London Palladium* featured a running gag with Norman Wisdom and Bruce Forsyth, during which Wisdom makes repeated attempts to sing 'When Irish Eyes Are Smiling'. This was cut out. Also chopped was part of 'Beat the Clock' in which a passing reference was made to Northern Ireland.

Paul Hogan's *England*, transmitted on 30 December, was also censored. Here, a sequence in which someone tried to steal a Harrods bag was dropped, as was one where a tourist asked the way to Harrods.

A Channel Four spokesman said that the cuts in the comedy programmes were 'simply a matter of taste at the time'. The channel was concerned that people might be upset, and there was the possibility of a further bomb outrage. Although Harrods had continued to advertise during the period this was in quite a different context. Moreover, he said, the channel had continued to run its regular Sunday programme *Irish Angle* despite some executives' feeling that it ought not to be broadcast. In the event this had produced a handful of complaints.

The episode has left a feeling of unease in Channel Four. One person said 'I agreed completely with the decisions we took. But I can see there's a problem of where to draw the line. If you take it to the logical extreme you'd have to end up by banning Dave Allen and Terry Wogan from British television'.

Philip Schlesinger

Terry O'Halloran adds:

According to several of those picked up in the waves of arrests following the London bomb attacks, their arrests had little or no connection with the bombings but were aimed at political activists. Few are willing to go on record with their complaints, but on Friday 9 December, shortly after the Woolwich bomb attack, an East London member of Sinn Fein was arrested by five plain clothes police. They had a warrant to search for explosives but, he says, did not bring dogs, sniffer devices or any other paraphernalia associated with searching for explosives. The search was 'less than thorough' (for instance, no floorboards were taken up) – but the police did take away leaflets, political pamphlets, diaries and address books.

He was held for 42 hours at Paddington Green police station under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. He says that in six 45 minute sessions he was never once questioned about bomb attacks, but was interrogated on his political associations, his activities for Sinn Fein and Sinn Fein finances. He has been charged under section 2 of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, forbidding the display of material likely to cause people to believe that you are a member or supporter of a proscribed organisation. The material in question is a Republican calendar sold to raise money for the Prisoners' Dependants' Fund.

On 21 December, after the Harrods' bomb, ex-prisoner Gerry Small was arrested. Here the police search was extremely thorough, including opening the children's Christmas presents. Gerry Small was held from 21 to 26 December. His friends say he was harassed while in police custody and was told, just before Christmas, that he would be served with an exclusion order. Small said he would appeal. At this point, according to his friends, he was told he would be held in Strangeways prison where 'National Front prison officers' would 'look after him'. He then accepted the explusion order and was deported to Ireland on Boxing day.

Mr Small was released from prison earlier this year after serving eight years of a 12 year prison sentence for conspiracy to cause explosions, and has lived under close surveillance in Manchester. Various newspapers and broadcasts connected him with the Birmingham bombing in November 1974. In fact, he had already been in police custody for three months at the time of the bombing.

Since the Prevention of Terrorism Act was introduced in November 1974, 5,500 people have been arrested but only 8 per cent charged with any offence under the Act. Opponents of the Act have long argued that the PTA is principally a means of gathering intelligence and discouraging people from engaging in legal political activity on Northern Ireland. □

MISCELLANY

Army gives bum directions

A government mole, undeterred by the cowardice of other publications, has brought the *NS* new secret documents outlining hitherto unkown aspects of British defence plans. So we can now reveal the 'RESTRICTED' contents of Appendix 1 to Annex D of Pamphlet 7 on Personal Protection of the NBCD Defence series. This is the official British Army 'Procedure for urination and defecation in the Arctic'. In order to urinate, squaddies must perform 22 separate steps, in the right order, beginning with Step 1: push ski-sticks into ground', and including 'Step 14: Adjust inner clothing to enable urination to be carried out in normal manner'.

Defecation requires 34 separate steps. Not until Step 16 is the squaddie permitted to 'Adopt crouch position and pull braces of NBC trousers to one side of posterior; Step 17: Defecate in normal manner'. Despite its complexity, Appendix 1 to Annex D of Pamphlet 7 does not include two instructions normally considered both civilised and important; wipe your bottom and wash your hands afterwards. Given the state of military hygiene revealed in this officially secret document, we have presented it to Des Wilson, who this week launches his 1984 Freedom of Information campaign. Official secrecy covers up not just dirty tricks – but also, it seems, dirty posteriors.

Base invaders

If profits from video games continue to decline, arcade owners should think about introducing a new sort of game that doesn't rely on male aggression in shooting down swarms of aliens. Two women in Newcastle-upon-Tyne have devised a computer game called Base Invaders, which involves avoiding policemen and cutting down the fence at Greenham Common. The game has caused considerable controversy in the North East, and computer shops are refusing to stock it. One shop owner explained his decision by saying: 'It is political and it can only be played by women.' Fran Martin and Annie Lockwood are not put off. They are planning two more games, one based on Windscale, where players have to contend with leaks of nuclear waste, and one called 'Four minute warning' where players have four minutes to collect together everything the government suggests a family needs in case of a nuclear attack.

Hard of hearing

Stand by for the March/April issue of *Screen* magazine, which will include an attack by Michael Poole on British television criticism. One of the critics disparaged by Poole is John Naughton, who writes *The Listener's* TV column (when *The Listener* is actually published, that is). Nothing very surprising about that – except that Poole himself happens to be assistant editor of *The Listener*, with particular responsibility for the paper's coverage of television.

Born to kill

As the servile press crawl away from Sandringham tugging their forelocks, they might ask themselves what all the fuss is about when the Royals get such fawning coverage. Well, the fuss is all about a double-page spread of eight pictures in the *Daily Mirror* on Saturday 31 December. They showed six-year-old Master Peter Phillips gleefully whirling a dead pheasant round his head after his father had shot it. Could it be that the Queen doesn't like *Mirror* readers knowing that royal male infants are taught to revel in killing?

What the papers say

Tuesday's lead story in *The Times* consisted in large part of reactions from other newspapers to the Queen's request for privacy. Quotations from three dailies, however, were missing. We can see why the *Financial Times* and *Morning Star* were left out: their readers are more interested in the Nigerian coup, the politics of Reagan and the future of capitalism. But what, we wonder, is the reason for not reporting the reaction of the Other Daily Murdoch, *The Sun*?

I spy . . .

An advertisement for an unusual job vacancy graced the *Guardian* on 19 December. Placed by the Personnel Officer at the US Embassy in London, the advert was for a 'Translator . . . for a position at US Embassy, Vienna'. Oddly, however, applicants were required to have 'native fluency in Bulgarian. High level of English, good educational background, knowledge of Bulgarian and world affairs'. The Personnel Office at the London Embassy was unable to explain to us why a sister embassy in a German-speaking country should require a Bulgarian language specialist. 'We can't assist you', said an official, explaining that they were merely 'acting as agents for one of our other offices here'. They couldn't say which 'other office' it was, and they were 'unable to take telephone enquiries' about the advert or the post. Practical advice was forthcoming, however, from the Embassy's Press Office. They knew nothing about the advert, but suggested: 'Maybe you should apply, then you'd find out about it'.

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Digging in against chemical warfare

AN UNDERGROUND bunker in residential London is being extensively modernised to protect military personnel against chemical and biological attack as well as nuclear explosion. This is the first time that the Ministry of Defence has prepared for a major chemical attack against a London military headquarters – in this case an air defence centre. Despite expecting that the residential area will be a target of chemical or biological attacks, no provision has been made to specially protect, or evacuate, the residents of the target area.

The bunker is 250 yards from the nearest housing at Bentley Priory near Stanmore. It was built in 1939 as an RAF headquarters. Early in 1983 local residents began to ask why a massive excavation was going on at the site. Eventually the MoD told them that it was 'necessary to enlarge and modernise the (air defence) centre at Bentley Priory to provide the facilities needed for the computers and displays for the new Air Defence System.' It was, they said, just a 'fairly large civil engineering project.'

In fact, as documents from the Property Services Agency, shown to the *New Statesman*, reveal, a major feature of the engineering work is the construction of a new decontamination block. Anyone entering the bunker will first have to pass through a six-room nuclear, biological and chemical decontamination zone. Plans show that four decontamination booths will hold troughs of Fuller's Earth, a simple chemical compound used to absorb traces of nerve gases or other chemical or biological weapons. There is also equipment to remove radioactive fallout.

The bunker redevelopment – described as the 'UKADGE SADOC' – will cost £3.42 million (the initials stand for Standby Air Defence Operations Centre of the UK Air Defence Ground Environment System). The main block of the underground bunker is two storeys deep and measures 50 feet by 180 feet. It has 50 rooms covering more than 20,000 square feet. It contains a kitchen, canteen and chemical toilets for prolonged occupation when the water supply has ended.

The renovated bunker also incorporates special electronic shielding called 'Tempest'. Two new computer rooms will be entirely surrounded by Tempest metal screens, which stop electronic pulses getting out to waiting spies, and protect them against the electro-magnetic pulse from a nuclear explosion.

Official Home Office policy calls for local residents to stay put in their homes and build their own nuclear shelters. But no official advice is available on civilian defence against chemical attack. Nor is there any provision for mass production of respirators against gas attack.

The Bentley Priory's Standby Air Defence Operations Centre, which the Ministry of Defence acknowledges to be a major UK military target, would take over in the event of the destruction or disablement of the new underground RAF headquarters which is now under construction on National Trust land near High Wycombe. The two are directly linked, and to the Air Defence Data Centre, at West Drayton near Heathrow Airport.

Duncan Campbell

Five inquiries on Welsh civil rights

NO FEWER than five inquiries are to be held into the police's handling of the Welsh explosives trial which ended with the acquittal of five defendants on charges of conspiracy (*NS* 25 November 1983).

Attorney General Sir Michael Havers is to hold an inquiry into why the defendants were held without trial for so long. Two of those acquitted of all charges had been held for line and six months, and the one defendant found guilty (of possessing explosives with intent to cause an explosion) had been held for 17 months before the trial.

Amnesty International was so concerned about the length of time the defendants spent in custody it sent an observer to the trial at Cardiff crown court, and will be producing its own report.

The South Wales police are holding an investigation into allegations of harassment made by defendants, which is being conducted by an assistant chief constable of another force, Merseyside. This report will not necessarily be made public, but South Glamorgan Police Authority earlier this month asked for a full internal investigation into the conduct of the case, which it could then publish. Labour member Michael Antoniw said the force's honesty and integrity had been called into question, and his motion calling for the investigation was carried unanimously.

The fifth and most wide ranging study of the case will be a 'public inquiry' organised in Cardiff at the end of February by the Welsh Campaign for Civil and Political Liberties. Phil Thomas, a law lecturer at Cardiff University and spokesperson for the Campaign, said he hoped the inquiry would look at the whole question of political policing in Wales.

The inquiry will be chaired by Lord Gifford, a radical barrister, and counsel and solicitors in the trial have promised to give evidence. The police will be invited to do so as well. It is expected to last about a week and the report will be published shortly afterwards.

Kieran Daly

Railroading London motorways

THE RIGHT to object to new roads may be limited to allow the government to push through a massive £3,000 million roads plan for London.

The proposal comes in a report from the civil engineering section of the National Economic Development Office. The report was drawn up in close consultation with the Department of Transport and will be sent to transport secretary Nicholas Ridley later this year.

Currently objectors to new roads can argue that the road should be on a different line or that the road is not needed at all. The right to object to the need for a road was won during the widespread disruption of public inquiries in the 1970s (although very few inquiries heed this argument).

The NEDO says this stretching of the scope of public inquiry has happened for reasons of expediency and in the mistaken view that the process was democratic. Public inquiries are not held in order to make established procedures more democratic. NEDO says their main purpose is to allow individuals to object to administrative action.

NEDO says that inquiries should concentrate on detailed design of roads and not on wide-ranging issues. 'We accept that it will be highly controversial and difficult to upset what has become accepted practice in this field.' The report notes that if all public involvement was cut then roads might get built in half the time.

Youthful Ken Livingstone at a public inquiry

Chris Davies/Report

The main aim of this clampdown on objectors' rights is to get motorways built in London. The report says 'the history of road development in London is an unfortunate one . . . with present policies for public involvement any proposal to undertake major road building in London will become lost . . . in an interminable wrangle about need, strategy (including the development of public transport) and wide-ranging alternative schemes.' The report says that if ministers decide to build roads in London then 'it is quite unacceptable for that decision to be frustrated by the public inquiry system'.

On Tuesday 10 January a new inquiry opens into the Department of Transport plan to spend £11 million on widening one mile of the Archway Road, in North London. At this inquiry the Greater London Council and four boroughs (three Labour and one Tory) will argue that the new road is not needed. The NEDO wants to rule this argument out of inquiry.

Behind this clampdown is the government's intention to take over 70 miles of main roads from the Greater London Council. This move is an implicit endorsement of a three-year-old plan, drawn up by the county surveyors in south-east England, to spend £4,500 million on new roads. Under this plan two-thirds of the money would be spent in London. The plan includes replacements for the controversial North Cross Route and West London Relief Road which were dropped by the GLC in, respectively, 1973 and 1981.

The report also recommends that the Department of Transport should stop using a computerised cost benefit technique called CoBA to decide whether a road should be built. As roads do not earn any income, the DoT compares the cost of a new road with the amount of time it saves drivers (assuming that time is money). Like other public investments the road has to produce a return on capital which betters the Treasury's test discount rate.

CoBA is the focus of a continuing fight inside the DoT between the economists and the road engineers. The economists use CoBA as a way of keeping the engineers in check, and stopping their wilder schemes. The NEDO proposes doing away with CoBA saying it is no good for 'determining the justification for individual schemes'. It says engineers should rely on 'local knowledge or common sense'.

However, the NEDO report should have no difficulty in gaining acceptance in the DoT. The man in charge of DoT liaison with the NEDO committee is A. C. B. Ramsay. The DoT's internal telephone directory says that he is in charge of 'progress on major road schemes, trouble shooting, policy on public consultation and inquiry procedures'.

Mick Hamer

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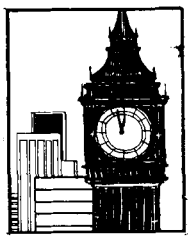

PETER KELLNER, Political Editor

Thud and blunder in Grays Inn Road

IT IS NOT ALL Andrew Neil's fault. When he became editor of the *Sunday Times* three months ago, the paper had already lost much of its particular capacity to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable. But, since then, the *Sunday Times* has deteriorated further.

Any former *ST* journalist, like myself, is bound to have a keen and, inevitably, partial interest in the paper's continuing fortunes. Readers of this column will doubtless adjust to that fact as they choose. Yet I feel that Britain is so inadequately served by its national press that it cannot afford to lose any of the islands of independence and inquiry *Sunday Times* once was.

Within the first year of Murdoch's ownership of the *ST* the paper lost a number of its best journalists. Some spent a while at *The Times* before parting company with the new regime (Harold Evans and Peter Watson, for example); others took their pay-offs from the *ST* directly (such as Ron Hall, John Barry and Philip Jacobson). The more recent departures of Magnus Linklater and Peter Gillman mean that the cadre of people that provided the *ST* with its distinctive qualities in the late 1960s and 1970s has diminished to the point where the few outstanding journalists that remain feel isolated and beleaguered.

Two particular consequences flow from the haemorrhage of talent. The first is that the paper lacks the internal muscle to combat the wilder instincts of the editor or proprietor. The second is that, within the office, the clash of debate among confident (often over-confident) protagonists has been replaced by trench warfare among rival camps.

Last year's fiasco over the Hitler 'diaries' – five months before Neil took over – illustrates the first point. Murdoch had negotiated their purchase without informing, let alone consulting, the journalists who had learned the lessons of the forged Mussolini 'diaries' in the 1960s. (Then, the *ST* discovered the forgery *before* rushing to print, not afterwards.) When Phillip Knightley, one of the paper's most experienced writers, was first told about the new 'diaries', just three days before the *ST* began publishing extracts, he informed the then editor, Frank Giles, in a memorandum:

> Beware of secrecy and being pressed to make a quick decision. The Mussolini con-men were able to bring off their sting by pressing Thomson to make a quick deal, otherwise *Corriere* (a leading Italian paper) would get the diaries. Absolute secrecy was essential, they said, to prevent the Italian government from stepping in. Both manoeuvres prevented a proper examination of the background of the salesmen and the provenance of the diaries.

Last month the *ST* carried a lengthy two-part account of the salesman and provenance of the Hitler 'diaries'. But the tale of blood and thunder in Germany contrasted with total silence about the thud and blunder in Grays Inn Road.

NEIL MIGHT reasonably say that the fiasco predated his arrival and that he would have prevented it. However, his actions since his arrival have served to weaken still further the position of the paper's remaining outstanding journalists. He has disbanded the Insight team and diverted space and resources from the serious business of inquiry to new, mainly superficial, sections on 'People', 'Innovation' and 'Screen', which covers cinema, TV, video and cable.

Taken individually, none of these new sections is intrinsically a bad idea. The issue is partly how they are run and partly what their effect is on the rest of the paper. Can the new *ST* report fully and impartially about developments in cable, when it has an interventionist proprietor with commercial interests in cable and an editor with strong views and former interests in the same? Chris Dunkley, the highly respected TV writer on the *Financial Times*, thought not and declined Neil's offer to edit the Screen pages.

It is, however, the effect of these new sections on the rest of the paper, and on the features section in particular, that raises the largest questions about Neil's direction; and it is over the future of features that some of the bitterest trench warfare is now being fought.

A flavour of that war is conveyed by an angry memo by Lewis Chester to three of the *ST's* senior executives last month. Chester is a former editor of Insight and one of the few outstanding journalists left on the paper. His memo is worth quoting at some length.

> The arrival of any new editor creates new uncertainties but the scale of them recently has been quite extraordinary. I can remember Harry Evans taking over and nothing could have been more whizz-bang than that, but his arrival did not disturb people at the deep level that is currently being experienced . . .
>
> The real clue to the rise of the *ST* – and to its ability to stay aloft – does not lie in its ability to re-process Monty's memoirs every three years, or in its ability to throw in massive resources when the big story comes along, or even in its sharp instinct for scoops. It lies in the rise in the authority and independence of the feature pages (which included Insight for the most part) . . .
>
> The problem with the sectional approach is that it often – I would say invariably – makes interesting phenomena more boring and therefore less accessible to the reader. Let's take an example. Let's say a brilliant inventor devises a new type of water pistol that can be used to zap video nasties. Put the story in People, emphasise oddball inventor? Put it in Innovation, with technical details and diagram of new water pistol? Put it in Screen, harrowing tale of endangered nasties? You takes your choice. But in whichever direction you put it the full lunatic beauty of such a story is impaired by having to be relevant to the heading on the page . . .
>
> Ever since I've been here there has been a natural rivalry between News and Features. Although there have been many upsets, it has seemed to me that the rivalry is basically a good thing. It's a form of creative in-house competition that inspires – and sometimes incites – people to do their best work. Right now, however, the creative rivalry is at the lowest point I can ever remember and the aggravation is at an all-time high . . .
>
> The power of uncreative tension to fuck up a newspaper should not be underestimated. Old friends and colleagues get testy with each other because they are trying to deal with a situation that is unworkable . . .

From my discussions with former colleagues on the *ST* it is clear that Chester's views are widely shared, and not only in the features department. Hugo Young, the political editor, has complained more than once about Neil's interference in the paper's political news reporting and about his tendency to ignore completely the views of senior staff when writing editorials. (Example: everyone with any knowledge of the subject opposed America's invasion of Grenada. Neil wrote an editorial not merely backing it, but arguing that Britain should have invaded first.)

Much criticism from the Left about *The Times* and *ST* under Murdoch has concerned the drift of both papers to the Right. What is happening now at the *ST* is more serious than that.

Part of the paper's strength over the past 20 years has been that has played a double role: as both member and critic of the political establishment. Its criticisms had impact precisely because it was *not* a 'lefty' paper. Rather, it was one that, when occasion demanded, possessed the determination, the resources and the journalistic talent to penetrate the Establishment's tawdy mask. Under Murdoch and Neil, the determination has gone, the resources have been diverted and much of the talent has left. □

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End of the road for sixth forms

This government has been fighting to preserve sixth forms and grammar schools as 'centres of excellence.' Rick Rogers shows how the facts and falling numbers are beating them

BY THE END of the decade, the traditional secondary school sixth form will have become an educational anachronism. The majority of young people who decide on full-time education after 16 will by then be in colleges rather than schools.

The sixth is being killed off by the effects of falling school rolls and the growing body of evidence that a break at 16 – by switching institutions – is beneficial both for young people themselves and for the schools.

The majority of the 104 local education authorities (LEAs) in England and Wales are now re-organising their 16-plus provision along college or tertiary rather than secondary lines. Already a quarter of all sixth-formers in the secondary sector are in sixth-form colleges rather than in school sixth forms. Almost half the LEAs (51) now have tertiary colleges and sixth-form colleges. In March 1982, according to the Standing Conference of Tertiary and Sixth-Form Colleges, there were 106 sixth-form colleges in 46 LEAs and 16 tertiary colleges in 10 LEAs. Today the figures are 110 SFCs and 22 TCs. Current proposals will push the number of tertiaries to 34 within three years. In addition, Sheffield is planning 7 to 9 tertiaries across the city – the biggest commitment so far to the tertiary concept.

A recent survey by the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education of 42 branches in existing or proposed tertiary colleges found that most were 'going tertiary' for positive reasons – because the LEA saw their educational advantages, rather than just as a defensive measure to cope with falling numbers.

In theory, authorities have several options for re-organisation: retaining small sixth forms in schools; consortia arrangements where schools co-operate to provide a broad choice of subjects in an area; a combination of academically-oriented 16 to 18 sixth-form colleges and vocational further education colleges; and an all-embracing 'comprehensive' tertiary college.

Most LEAs will have hit rock-bottom in terms of student numbers by 1992. If they have not properly 'rationalised' their post-16 provision by then, they will be in deep financial trouble and having difficulty in providing courses. Many are going for a 'mixed economy' approach to the problem – taking into account existing factors such as location, availability of buildings, local professional and parental pressures and direction by Sir Keith Joseph, the Secretary of State for Education. But the underlying trend is towards the college rather than the school for post-16 students. Even in LEAs such as Inner London which have gone almost exclusively along the 'consortia' path, this is increasingly seen as a stop-gap measure on the way to a 'college' solution. So far, though, tertiary colleges are only planned for the Wandsworth area.

In a period when the 16 to 19 age group was reaching its peak (1979 to 1982) just before the dramatic fall of over a third later this decade, the pace of the drift to tertiary could be clearly seen:

Number of full-time and sandwich students in:

	1979	1982	increase %
school sixth forms	260,000	277,000	6.5
sixth-form colleges	43,000	64,000	49.0
tertiary colleges	12,000	24,000	100.0
FE colleges	200,000	235,000	17.5

(sources: DES statistics branch and Macfarlane report 1981)

Last year a DES-commissioned study demonstrated that sixth-form colleges and, particularly, tertiary colleges were more cost-effective than 11 to 18 schools – as well as offering a wider range of courses. Surveys have also revealed a marked preference for colleges after 16 amongst young people. There is a similar 'marked preference' among DES officials and the schools' inspectorate. However, neither group has been prepared to push its view in the face of Tory ministers' championing of the traditional sixth form.

The 1981 report on 16 to 19 education (the Macfarlane report) set out the government's response to the urgent need to rationalise post-16 provision. It failed to give any sensible guidance to local authorities. It was up to them, it said. But the government didn't quite mean that. It wanted cost-effective schemes, but also wanted to preserve school sixth forms 'of proven worth'.

UNTIL THE LAST election, education minister Dr Rhodes Boyson led the vigorous official defence of the traditional sixth form, especially those in grammar schools. But such a policy is misconceived for several reasons. First, it hasn't worked. Since 1979, this government has had to approve more tertiary colleges than any other. The number of sixth-form colleges has risen by a quarter.

The effect of colleges on 'staying-on' rates has been dramatic. Many sixth-form colleges, such as Barnsley, Salford, North Tyneside, which operate 'open-access' policies, speak of a doubling of the number staying in full-time education compared with secondary schools. Since 1970, when the first tertiary college was set up in Exeter (the first sixth-form college opened in Luton in 1966), the proportion of young people staying in the sixth form has remained constant; where there is a post-16 college the rate has risen steadily. (Ironically, the only exception is the sixth-form college in Solihull which operates a highly selective entry system for its exclusively A-level courses.)

Tertiary colleges also reflect the rise in numbers. Andover in Hampshire boasts 900-plus full-timers, when the old grammar school and FE college arrangements could only attract a third of that total. Hampshire colleges have also noted another trend: a major influx of students from local independent schools, because of better provision and enhanced chances of success.

For not only do more stay on to do a wider range of courses, but the overall success rate of exams is higher in the colleges than in secondary schools, even including the grammar schools. Leicester's sixth-form college for example, where two out of every three 16-plus students go, has just seen a fully comprehensive intake produce better A-level results than the old grammars. In Barnsley, twice as many students now attempt A-levels as did so at the three grammar schools. The success rate is comparable. Nationally, sixth-form colleges are performing as well as or better than school sixth-forms.

National statistics for tertiary colleges are

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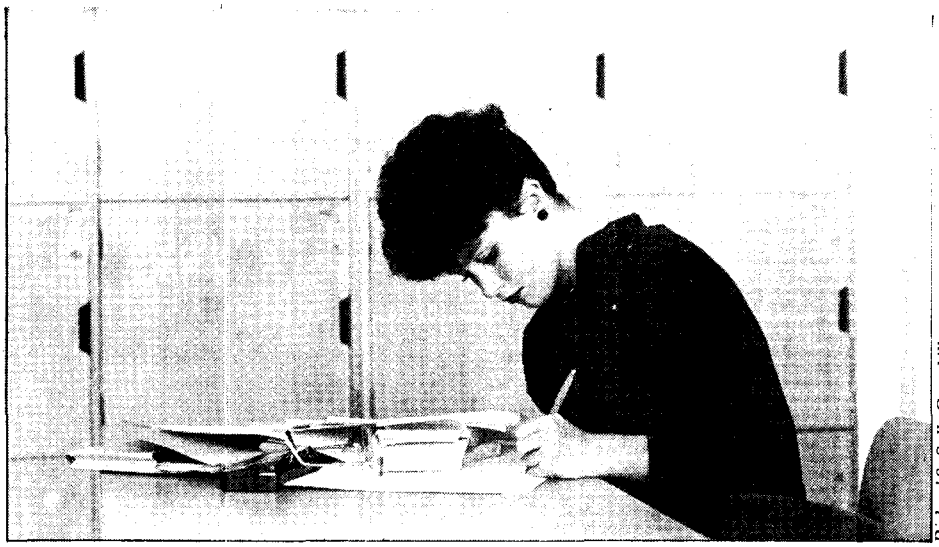

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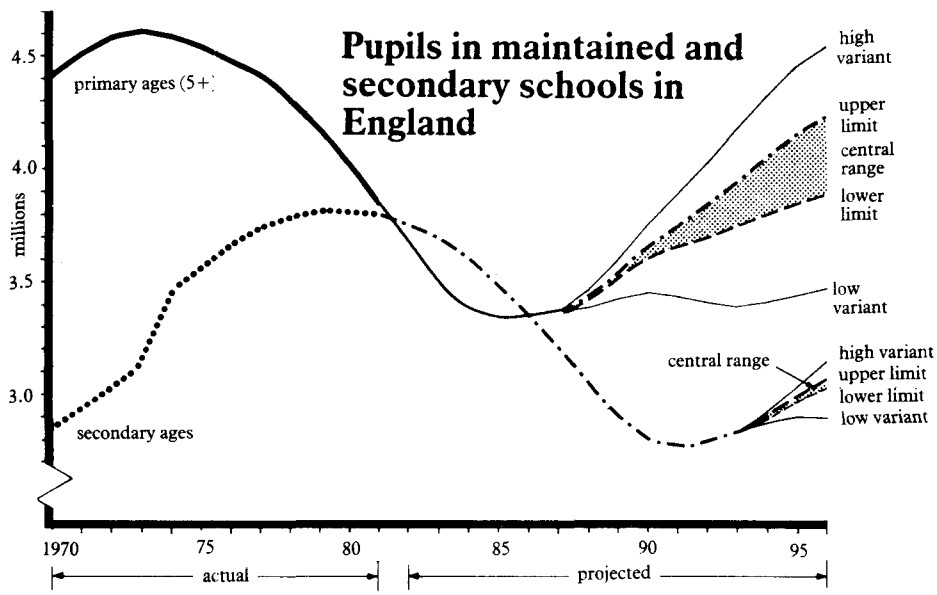

not available. But those in Somerset have been recording A-level passes above the national average for grammar schools. Lancashire's colleges are not recording better A-level results and Oxbridge entrance than local grammar schools.

students:	sixth-form colleges %	school sixth forms %
passing 1 A-level	17.5	18.0
2 A-levels	24.2	22.6
3 A-levels	33.3	32.0
4 or more	13.5	14.2
attempting 2 A-levels and passing 2	41.0	37.4
attempting 3 A-levels and passing 3	56.6	52.7
attempting 4 or more and passing 3 or more	80.4	78.6
attempting 4 or more and passing 4 or more	58.1	55.3

ONE CRUCIAL consequence of post-16 re-organisation is the further decline of the grammar school. In January 1981, there were 200 grammars in England; in 1982, they were down to 186. Since then, a further 10 have been approved for closure. The pace is now quickening. Since 1979, a quarter of all grammar schools have been closed – by a Tory administration. Despite the as yet abortive attempts to set up 'super-grammars' in Solihull and Worcester, the battle for the grammar, as for the sixth form, is a rearguard one. Few are likely to survive the inexorable logic of falling numbers of pupils. Some LEAs have no sixth forms at all. This will eventually be the rule rather than the exception.

Government's only effective counter lies in LEAs' legal obligation to submit to the Department of Education and Science proposals which attract local opposition, or which mean abolishing more than 20 per cent of school places – fairly common in proposals designed to cope with the massive fall in numbers. DES decisions have been called 'bizarre' by teacher unions and 'inconsistent' by local authorities. DES officials maintain that schemes are rejected because they were ineffectual or muddled. Looking at the 26 proposals vetted and formally announced by the DES, in 1982 and 1983, the inconsistency shows up:

Proposals for:	total	approved	rejected
tertiary colleges	12	6	6
sixth-form colleges	8	6	2
retaining sixth-forms	6	3	3

The two main reasons for rejections are concern over the effects on a school losing its over-16s (now said to be Joseph's main anxiety since taking on personal responsibility for 16-19 provision last June) and wanting to retain sixth forms of proven worth. Official criteria for deciding are size (too small?), range of courses (too narrow?), exam success and parental esteem – the latter two being the key ones. LEAs seem more clearsighted than the government over what will work best in the future. Major cities such as Manchester and Birmingham are stuck with schemes altered or rejected purely to ensure the survival of grammar sixth forms. But other authorities, such as Durham, are re-submitting the same tertiary proposals, previously rejected by the DES, because they are seen as the only way to avoid educational disaster when the numbers plummet.

There are, though, structural problems in the tertiary system too. Some sixth-form colleges are too academic; some tertiaries too ready to repeat the faults of FE colleges – rigidly departmentalised and unable to offer a full range of courses and the flexibility seen as the promise of a tertiary system. Both the exam system and student grants arrangements need revamping to meet the demands of students' new learning patterns.

Sixth-form colleges are hampered by having to operate under secondary school regulations. This means, for example, different staffing arrangements, teaching-time allocations, a block on part-time students and fewer vocational courses. The biggest problem, however, is in the different salary scales of the two sectors.

THE TEACHING unions are divided over the merits of the various forms of provision – educationally and professionally. For example, NATFHE clearly favours tertiary colleges. But a concordat with the National Union of Teachers talks only of joint support for a tertiary *system* in its various guises. The Labour Party, too, has so far ducked the issue. Official policy is to promote open access to whatever provision happens to be there at the time. That was described by one Labour MP as 'daft – like saying we are for a comprehensive system, but that schools don't have to be comprehensive'. Labour only objects to 'mushroom' schools, where some schools have sixth forms and others don't – thus creating a pecking order among local schools.

But the ground is already moving as several authorities press on to try to link the perceived strengths of the two sectors – the flexibility, technical and vocational experience, and responsiveness to industry of FE; the academic rigour, and pastoral care and counselling tradition of secondary. Already several sixth-form colleges are moving on to become tertiary colleges, as in Hampshire, Harrow, Knowsley, Scunthorpe and Wolverhampton. Other principals say, privately, they expect eventually to go tertiary.

Brockenhurst sixth-form college in Hampshire is about to become a tertiary college to be able to handle a broader range of the community's educatonal and vocational needs. Principal John Baker says its earlier change from local grammar to sixth-form college was met with anger and concern from parents and councillors over the preservation of standards and the needs of more able students. The same concerns are being expressed this time round. At least it is a step forward that sixth-form colleges are now seen as having 'proven worth'. □

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HEROIN

After school

Rob Edwards reports on the heroin 'epidemic' in Scotland

Both photos: Chris Hill

Heather Black: 'politicians about as useful as a chocolate teapot', and (right) Muriel Hart

ON 8 DECEMBER, Des was found dead in the toilet of a pub in Edinburgh. In his late 20s and not long out of prison, he had bought a packet of heroin and killed himself with an overdose. He was, recalls Muriel, a 'beautiful laddie, dead because there was no place in Scotland to send him'.

Muriel is a large, kindly, soft-spoken mother of two heroin addicts. She lives in Muirhouse, one of the more deprived areas of Edinburgh. In spite of the fact that she has heart disease, she devotes virtually all her time to helping addicts in the area. She describes how Des had been trying to kick the habit and how he had sought help the day before he died. 'We've had seven deaths in seven months,' she says, telling a series of macabre stories about young people who have died due to their drug addiction. For good measure she recounts the recent occasion when a young girl was violently sick all night after she had mistakenly injected herself with some talcum powder. 'People in authority just don't care,' she sighs.

Ironically, Des featured briefly in Granada Television's recent three-part documentary on heroin, which was largely inspired by the local group with which Muriel is involved – SHADA (Support Help and Advice on Drug Addiction). The documentary showed how Morag Maclean, an addict for ten years and one of the founders of SHADA, disappointed everyone by returning to heroin during the course of the filming.

Failures like these illustrate the extraordinary difficulties facing any group seeking to combat hard drug abuse, but they do not mean that the task is hopeless. Muriel reckons that there are currently about seven addicts with whom SHADA are making real progress. The group's twice weekly meetings are memorable experiences, combining administration, campaigning and counselling.

Addicts, ex-addicts, their mothers, relatives and friends all share experiences and try to deal with difficulties and setbacks. They are often joined by the most famous former inmate of Glasgow's Barlinnie Special Unit, Jimmy Boyle, who, along with his wife Sarah, has been a moving force in the group from the outset. He discovered fairly recently that his 17-year-old son is a heroin addict.

One of the key problems is trust. Addicts' desperation makes them skilful manipulators and frequent thieves. According to Davie, one of the addicts who featured in the TV programme, you will do literally anything to make sure you can get your daily dose of 'smack': 'You'll murder your mother. You'll murder your father. You'll cut someone's throat for a fiver a bag'. Much time at SHADA meetings is thus taken up exploring whether or not people are telling the truth. To the observer, it soon becomes obvious that it is more difficult for addicts to lie successfully to their friends and neighbours than it is for them to deceive doctors, social workers or the police.

Unfortunately, relations between SHADA and the professionals have not been happy. The group is critical of doctors for intolerance of addicts' difficulties and for inconsistent and ill-thought-out prescription policies. They say that social workers fail to understand the problem, and attack the police for treating addicts 'like dirt'. Most politicians are dismissed, by SHADA worker Heather Black, as 'about as useful as a chocolate teapot'. The professionals in turn accuse SHADA of being inexperienced, disorganised and too aggressive. The group's high media profile has not always made relations easier. There is probably justice on both sides – it is hardly surprising that there should be clashes on an issue which arouses such strong emotions.

ALTHOUGH THE statistics are far from perfect, there are reckoned to be between 40-50,000 heroin addicts in Britain – about twice the figure of two years ago. In Scotland, the number of people formally notified as being addicted to a narcotic drug has trebled in the last four years. Last June, Lothian and Borders' retiring chief constable, Sir John Orr, pointed out that there were at least 90 known dealers' addresses within Edinburgh, but admitted that the drug squad were only 'touching the tip of the iceberg'. Like others, he called for the establishment of a specialised centre for the treatment of drug abuse in Lothian.

Addicts can spend over £100 a day on heroin – a level of expenditure which can only be funded by prostitution or crime: shoplifting; housebreaking; cheque and credit card frauds. Between 30 and 40 per cent of house break-ins in Edinburgh are said to be carried out by regular drug users – a figure that rises to perhaps 75 per cent in the Muirhouse and Pilton areas of the city. The number of young people in the area who have used heroin may now be as high as one in ten.

According to Dr John Basson, a consultant forensic psychiatrist at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital, heroin addiction is an epidemic comparable to the cholera and typhoid that swept Britain in the last two centuries. 'They were caused by socio-economic problems – bad wages, poor drainage, bad housing and bad food,' he said. 'Now the problem is caused by the alienation and unemployment on large working-class estates.' Although they do not often see eye to eye, SHADA would agree with Basson up to a point. SHADA disputes, however, that heroin is just a working-class problem, suggesting that it might be more hidden amongst the middle class.

Two weeks before Christmas, the Home Secretary Leon Brittan made a great fuss in announcing some measures to deal with heroin abuse. While it is difficult to criticise the specific steps taken (a couple of law enforcement officers dispatched abroad, more controls on prescriptions and some minor legal changes), it is easy to see how inadequate they are. Brittan reiterated that the government had made £6 million available to support local schemes to help addicts in England and Wales. In Scotland, no figure has been set, but health boards, social work departments and voluntary groups have been invited to apply for grants for drug rehabilitation projects.

SHADA, in submitting an application for an ambitious £250,000 project, is competing with about half a dozen bids from other organisations in Edinburgh. Yet they realise, as most of those involved with combating this problem realise, that any number of worthy government-funded initiatives cannot cure the epidemic. Acute social problems require wide-ranging and radical political solutions. Quietly, but angrily, Muriel highlights the desperation that drives young kids to hard drugs: 'The day that school gate shuts on them, they've got nothing. They cannot even sign on right away but they've been promised so much. It really makes me sick to think that we bring kids into this world just to become old men and women at 16 or 17'. □

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ECONOMIC POLICY

Generation gap

Chris Pond on the Tory case for cutting youth wages

AT LAST the statisticians in the Department of Employment have come up with some 'evidence' to support the government's claim that young people are 'pricing themselves out of jobs.' A research paper published just before Christmas saying that a 10 per cent cut in youth wages would result in an extra 70,000 to 100,000 jobs for young people must have been greeted with some relief by ministers.*

Over the past four years, the government has tried in a number of ways to cut the wages of young people, but has been embarrassed by the lack of evidence for any connection between high youth wages and the level of youth unemployment. Even the *Financial Times* pointed out, on 28 June 1982, 'the Department of Employment researchers are having some difficulty arming ministers with the material they need to defend their point of view'. A research paper from the Department of Employment had been unable to find 'any systematic relationship' at all between youth unemployment and young people's relative pay.

So it was that researchers were told to go away and find evidence in line with government policy. The latest offering, which contradicts the findings of the Department's earlier research, has obediently obliged.

At first glance, the report appears to confirm what ministers had believed all along. A 10 per cent cut in the wages of young workers would result in an increase of 20 per cent in the jobs available to young men and of 15 to 20 per cent in those for young women. But on closer inspection these conclusions appear suspect. Of the extra 70,000-100,000 jobs created for young people by this cut in wages, *four fifths* would be at the expense of jobs lost by adult workers. And even this modest job-creation effect is open to doubt.

The author of the paper warns that the results are 'extremely tenuous'. Part of the reason for this is that a large part of the apparent rise in young people's relative earnings during the 1960s was purely statistical. The raising of the school leaving age, for instance, would have pushed up young people's relative pay simply by taking out of the labour market the youngest and lowest paid workers. And, of course, the biggest increase in youth unemployment has come since the mid 1970s – when young people's relative pay has actually fallen.

Although the depression of youth wages is partly caused by mass youth unemployment, it is also associated with a set of government policies pursued explicitly to cut the wages of young people.

The meagre allowances paid under the Youth Training Scheme (YTS), usually £25 per week except where trades unions have negotiated a better rate, help to undercut established pay rates. But more important is the Young Workers Scheme (YWS), dreamed up by the Prime Minister's economic adviser Professor Alan Walters.

Under YWS, employers can claim a subsidy of up to £15 a week for each person they employ aged under 18 and paid less than £42 a week. Employers who pay more than this lose all or part of the subsidy. Companies which cut the wages of teenagers they already employ, or who replace adult workers with subsidised youngsters, still qualify. The *only* condition is that the employers should pay low wages.

Although most people have never heard of YWS – including most of the young people who are actually on it – there were 107,000 people on the scheme in October 1983. But the scheme has not been a great success as a method of creating new jobs. According to the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee, 77 per cent of the jobs subsidised under YWS would have existed anyway. However, the Institute for Manpower Studies has estimated, in a paper commissioned by the Department of Employment but never published, that 94 per cent of YWS jobs would have existed anyway.

Despite the shortage of evidence that low youth wages create employment, average earnings for young people have continued to fall, both in real terms and relation to adult pay. During 1982/83, the first full year of the operation of the YWS, they rose by between 1 and 3 per cent – well below the rate of inflation – while adult earnings increased by between 8.5 and 10 per cent.

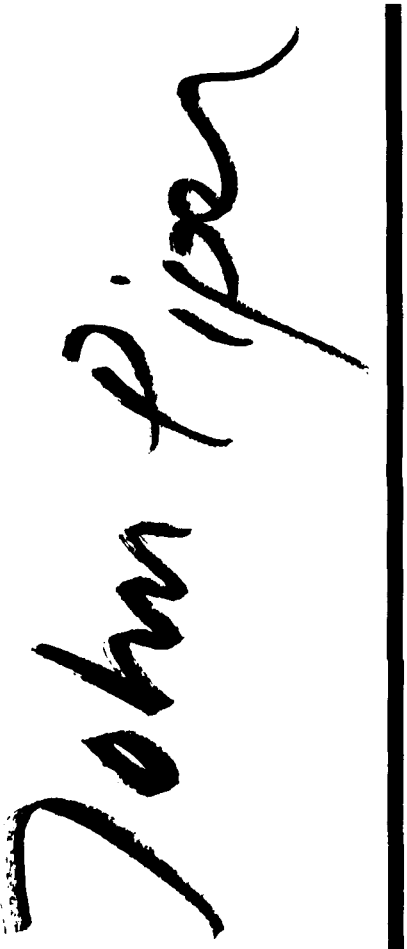
Ministers had hoped to cut youth wages still further by removing the protection of wages councils – which set minimum rates of pay in industries such as retailing, hairdressing and catering. This, they were advised, would be in breach of an international agreement (International Labour Organisation convention 26), to which Britain is bound until 1985.

Meanwhile YWS has helped undermine wages councils, because some employers covered by the councils can only qualify for a YWS subsidy if they pay below the minimum rates. The government refuses to check YWS applications to make sure companies are not getting state subsidies *because* they are committing a criminal offence.

No doubt ministers will be undeterred by such questions of law and who should obey it. Armed with what looks like credible evidence to support their wage-cutting strategy they will now press on still more fervently. Yet the long-term costs of making young people a scapegoat for the failures of economic policy, in terms of lost aspirations or alienation, could prove high. □

*W. Wells, The relative pay and employment of young people, *Department of Employment research paper no. 42.*

Chris Pond is director of the Low Pay Unit.



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HEALTH

Woman heal thyself

John Hargreaves on a new approach to toxaemia

FEW PROFESSIONALS care to be lectured in their own field by their clients. But when Dawn James faithfully followed her doctor's advice during pregnancy and succumbed nevertheless to a disease which kills on average twelve women and hundreds of foetuses every year in Britain, no one could tell her why. This 27 year old woman, living in a council flat in Hackney – 'shy, and not a speaker type at all . . . from a working class background and a secondary modern school' – determined to find out for herself.

Two years later she was invited back by the Senior Nursing Officer to the hospital where her baby was born, to explain to the midwifery staff what she believes are the causes of toxaemia of pregnancy, and how it can be prevented.

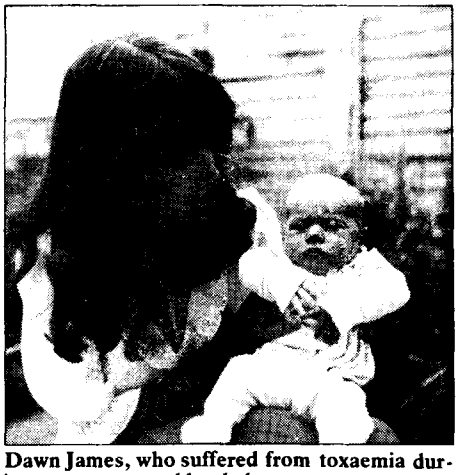
Pre-eclamptic toxaemia (a misnomer because it is now recognized that no 'toxin in the blood' is involved) is a condition unique to pregnancy, generally diagnosed upon appearance of two of a triad of symptoms – high blood pressure, swelling, and protein in the urine. Abdominal pains, headaches and blinding flashes of light may alert a pregnant woman that something is seriously wrong. At its extreme, the condition becomes eclampsia, the epileptic-like convulsions that can be fatal to mother and baby.

Diagnosis of pre-eclampsia is confused by the fact that all three of its cardinal symptoms may arise from other causes, many of which are entirely benign. This is often not recognized by doctors, who may begin treatment of healthy pregnant women, sometimes causing problems where none in fact existed. Even in genuine cases, standard medical treatment with bedrest, sedatives, drugs to control blood pressure, and early induction of labour does little to ameliorate the condition. Many doctors believe that the only effective treatment is to end the pregnancy.

Pre-eclampsia is still hailed as 'the ancient enigma' in obstetric journals, and a consultant dealing with a reader's problem for *Woman* magazine wrote recently 'the cause of pre-eclampsia is not known . . . Because of this it is not possible to give advice on how to avoid it'. While midwives have taken Dawn James's findings seriously, the obstetric profession remains obdurate and aloof.

It was in the women's magazines that Dawn James began her own search, with a request that others who had suffered pre-eclampsia write to her. She had 200 replies. She sent them a questionnaire, and compared her findings with what she had learned from the textbooks. Pre-eclampsia was supposed to be more common in twin pregnancies, overweight women and diabetics, and to run in families. None of these categories fitted Dawn James, and none was common among her correspondents. These women, anxious about their future, had invariably been reassured by their doctors that pre-eclampsia was a disease of first pregnancies only. Yet out of the 32 respondents who *had* undertaken another pregnancy, 23 had suffered pre-eclampsia again! With the support of many of these women Dawn established P.E.T.S., the Pre-Eclamptic Toxaemia Society.

DAWN BEGAN a massive educational effort involving correspondence with 'the experts' across the three continents and delving through the medical journals reaching back over a hundred years. But alongside continuous reportage of this work in the quarterly P.E.T.S. newsletter, Dawn kept publishing the personal experiences of her members – tragic accounts of unsuspecting women meticulously following their



Dawn James, who suffered from toxaemia during pregnancy, and her baby

doctors' orders and yet succumbing quite suddenly to convulsions and coma and having either a premature, low-weight baby (with a much higher risk of mental or physical disability) or a stillbirth.

An underlying theme did begin to emerge from Dawn's reading, and that was the supreme relevance of the mother's diet. John Lever at Guy's in 1843 was probably the first obstetric physician to take a dietary history, noting 'a single daily meal of bread and tea' from a woman with 'puerperal convulsions'. The work of Hamlin in Australia, Strauss in North Carolina and especially Brewer in California made a strong impression. Here was an account of the aetiology of pre-eclampsia – from inadequate nutrition through liver dysfunction, low blood albumin and reduced blood volume – which made sense, and was supported by the evidence amongst the severely undernourished subjects involved. But how could this apply to Britain, in the 1980s?

By the time the next newsletter was compiled, Dawn had made the most significant step of all, by simply asking herself, as so few obstetricians have asked of their patients since John Lever, 'what exactly had I been eating?': 'During the first twelve weeks of my pregnancy I was constantly vomiting day and night and survived a few weeks mostly on bottles of lucozade . . . then at about 5 months I was told I had gained 'too much' and that I should cut down on my food. I felt really hungry all the time and would sneak a potato or some bread until my husband would remind me of the expert advice and I would go back to mostly salads . . . When I was in hospital . . . I hardly ate at all during those two weeks prior to my induction.'

Again and again the personal experiences indicated maternal under-nutrition, sometimes instigated by doctors setting artificial weight limits. And more scientific studies, conducted by dieticians and public health physicians rather than obstetricians, were given a new prominence in P.E.T.S. They showed that pre-eclampsia could be effectively prevented by thorough nutrition counselling or diet supplementation.

The obstetric profession doesn't like this idea. 'I would counsel that you drop any reference to Brewer's work,' wrote Professor Ian MacGillivray about the Californian champion of the nutritional thesis, 'if you wish to have any support from research workers into this problem in the United Kingdom or for that matter, in any part of the world.'

Nancy Stewart, another P.E.T.S. member and recent editor for the Association for Improvements in the Maternity Services, believes that this is inevitable given the training and role of obstetricians. 'Prevention through good nutrition is a woman-centred approach, which means being in touch with women's daily lives. And it has to do with health, rather than disease. This is the approach of midwives, as the guardians of normality. Obstetrics is not about health, but about diagnosing and treating disease. It is a male science, and within the political structure of maternity care it is these men, trained to approach pregnancy as a medical event, who have the power to define health care.'

Pre-eclampsia is more prevalent among unskilled working class people and teenaged, Asian and single mothers – those statistically least likely to meet the extra nutritional demands of pregnancy. How can a few informed women hope to change the system of maternity care to benefit these in greatest need? Midwives may learn eagerly from P.E.T.S., and may even recall the days when their duties included baking and delivering egg custards to get concentrated protein into poor pregnant women, but their role as independent practitioners is being rapidly diminished into one of obstetric nurses.

Perhaps P.E.T.S. can work its approach into the health care system through the back door, women taking the lead. But in the meantime as many as 15 per cent of women in pregnancy are diagnosed as pre-eclamptic, and very few of them discover in time the protective effects of sufficient high quality foods. Instead they are categorized immediately as high risk and referred to the obstetric clinic, where sophisticated, expensive diagnostic procedures chart with scientific precision the worsening and irreversible damage to their babies. □

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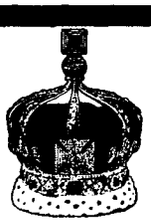

"This is the story of a rape, of the events that led up to it and followed it...the affair ended with two nations locked in an imperial embrace of such long standing and subtlety it was no longer possible for them to know whether they hated or loved one another."

Paul Scott's epic story of the end of The British Raj

THE JEWEL IN THE CROWN

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DIARY

Austin Mitchell

A Private Member's Bill turns you into a mini-government, law draftsman, Ministry of Propaganda, Whip's Office and Lobbyist all at once. Taking on the Law Society gives the added burden of battling against a freemasonry. So the result of my House Buyer's Bill was not elation but total exhaustion, coupled with a paranoid feeling that I was being followed everywhere by men in striped suits, driving Rover 3.5s. The next round will be even harder, with a long committee stage all for nothing unless the government helps and stops sulking, because something it should be doing itself has been tackled by a Labour MP. So I decided on a restful Christmas in Yorkshire to recharge batteries. The reality was continuous rain and no rest. Christmas is an enormous symbol of the semi-retired economy Margaret is busily building: eating, drinking, watching American rubbish on Japanese videos and, above all, nothing to do – no work. In the free floating economy, the base of work disintegrates and we spend money we haven't got to maintain a standard of living we don't deserve. Neither Christmas debauch nor the semi-retired economy are any real preparation for the rigours to come. Dyspepsia by January. Scrooge by 1990.

○

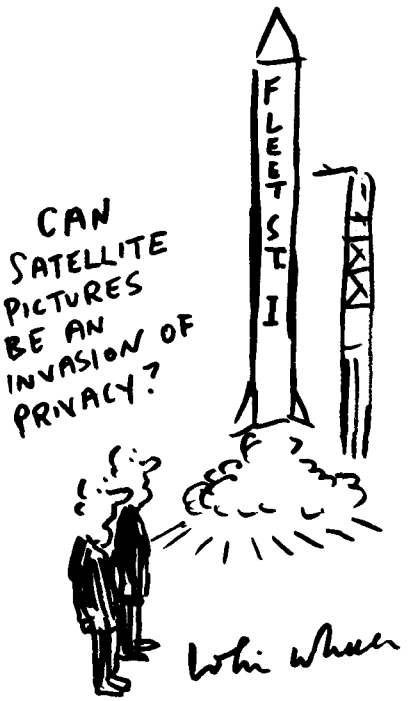
With Thatchernomics, *si monumentum requiris, circumspice:* in Sowerby Bridge. The Industrial Revolution transferred life from the hills to the valleys and now it's limping back again. The hills are alive with the sound of hammers, bourgeoisification by sand blasting, the creak of bicycle chains (particularly mine) and the clump of the older unemployed walking in the rain 'for something to do'. The valleys are dying. Sowerby Bridge's main street looks miserable: crumbling mills, shops dedicated to taking in each other's washing. Where once stood the great steam engine works that folded in the last depression is now a disco which looks pretty shaky (non-Stevens version). Everywhere the mills are half-used shells, peopled by four men with forklift trucks where hundreds used to toil, or left empty, like the huge Crossley carpet works at Dean Clough where all my aunts used to work – its top quality looms destroyed *in situ* by an absentee management determined that its skilled workers should not do profitably what they had failed with.

○

Thatchernomics, with its high interest rates, overvalued pound and full-blast competition from the EEC, has given the millowners and the engineering employers of the West Riding the political morality they wanted and killed their firms in the process. Which leaves the cradle of the Industrial Revolution playing a last, sad role as its graveyard. That may not mean much in Virginia Water, but it is the death of a nation. As regional economies die, Britain slowly collapses in on London. A nation is the sum of its parts. When those – the Sowerby Bridges, Halifaxes, even Grimsbies – had life, they had power. Now, they are dependent. The parts were different because people who produce differ depending on whether they produce wool, steel, coal, fish or ships. As consumers, we're all the same shoddy, greedy and, in Britain, second rate gobblers of discounted goods from overseas. As the regions collapse and Margaret Thatcher demolishes any independent power centre she doesn't particularly like, from Trade Unions to Local Government, the real shape of the nine year Reichette is emerging: a centralised state, a servile population bought by peddling them their own future. Nothing to stand in the way of the central will. Hers.

○

I've had a Paul (sic) cast over my Xmas by one Ould Acquaintance I've been trying to forget: Paul Genney, Grimsby's former Labour agent and friend. He bonded myself and present agent with an SDP Xmas present: a bill for around ten thousand pounds. An SDP team worked on it: SDP solicitors; renegade Labour candidate barrister. Yet the presiding genius and the animus were Paul's, divising a clever legal tactic which is now available to any disgruntled candidate who wants to avenge defeat by other means and cripple opponents financially. Paul departed the Grimsby Labour Party saying, 'You have one of the finest constituency



MPs in the country,' and telling me he would never in any circumstances stand against me. Within two years he was SDP candidate, telling the electors to 'ask what your MP has done for Grimsby'. An inevitable evolution. Politics without the disciplines of collective conditioning and firm roots in principle are those of opportunism, personalities and issue stirring, and every issue had to be stirred against this incumbent who inevitably became his bete rouge. A breakway party dedicated to saving socialism from extremists is soon trapped into fighting former friends more bitterly than old enemies. It has to do them down to survive. So friendship turns sour.

○

I don't really understand his motives, but I must admit it was cleverly done. Paul built up his dossiers and subjected our returns to an intense scrutiny few could stand up to. To prove that we were right, we would have to call witnesses, pick over the trivia and embark on a High Court case costing us several thousand a day. On 20 December we opted for a compromise suggested by his barrister, a former counsel to *Private Eye*, who possibly may have thought the case less strong than the vindictiveness. Relief on four points, the rest to go jointly to the DPP and we shoulder costs. Paul should go far as a legal genius, though his prospects in the New Owenite SDP can't be that good after this. In a system of Napleyism gone mad, our £10,000 bill is modest by contrast with Len Fairclough's defence costs of £48,000, or the £50,000 bill picked up by Adrian Slade, the Liberal GLC contestant. Yet it is huge by my standards and those of the Grimsby party. If the same goodwill motivates the debt collection as inspired the case, it could be bankruptcy in 1984. Unless we start a Genneyballs fund. Thank you *New Statesman* for the first contribution. Happy New Year to all men of goodwill. Said he with a slightly desperate smile.

ROGER WODDIS

Deep thoughts

In an article in The Times *entitled 'Time to wage war on peace studies' Roger Scruton writes: 'It is a campaign not for new forms of education, but against the very idea of education, a campaign to replace teaching by indoctrination. And its aim is transparently political.'*

The cogent case he sets before you,
In which the issues are made plain,
Is one he's positive will floor you,
Considering his mighty brain.

The studies that provide the kernel
Of nutty arguments for peace
Require two columns in the journal
And actions by our Thought Police.

The propaganda now seducing
Defenceless children in our schools
Is chorus enough for introducing
A right-of-Genghis set of rules.

The fruit that fell on Isaac Newton
Uncovered truth for all mankind;
The gravity of Roger Scruton
Reveals the closed and clammy mind.

We must wage war on all suggestions
That cut the flesh and nudge the bone;
'Political' means asking questions
That rightly should be left alone.

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Game plan 1984

Claudia Wright looks at the Reagan record and forecasts a possible election year 'surprise'

Washington

ON THE DAY last month when US warplanes were shot down over Lebanon by Arab gunners, President Reagan appeared on the front cover of a popular Sunday magazine wearing a tee-shirt, his arm muscles bulging. Inside the magazine, the President authored an article illustrated with more muscle-flexing photographs and a 1941 cheesecake shot of the young Ronnie.

Mr Reagan reported that he has added one and three-quarters of an inch to his chest since he started his White House exercise programme. He said that he has also put on an extra five pounds, but explained that 'muscle is heavier than fat and accounts for most of the increase.' He mentioned that someone had recently suggested he install a punching bag 'so that when I have had a rough day, I could just paste up the picture of whomever (sic) has been giving me trouble, and give them what for.' He quoted 'the old cavalry saying, "There's nothing as good for the inside of a man as the outside of a horse".' And, with a telltale clue to a case of septuagenarian narcissism, he gave the whole macho game away: 'Maybe I still like to show off for Nancy, but I still enjoy doing a swan dive and a jacknife now and then.'

When Mr Reagan overruled the objections of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to order aerial retaliation against Syrian positions in Lebanon, did he imagine that he was giving President Hafez al-Asad 'what for' on an imaginary punching bag? Was the invasion of Grenada a Presidential swan dive for Mrs Reagan to coo at in admiration?

We all need to ponder what further displays of the hair on Mr Reagan's chest may be in store for Mrs Reagan and the rest of the world in the months ahead. For Mr Reagan remains the arch politician and he faces a tough election against the Democrats – in all likelihood, a combination of Walter Mondale and a Southern Senator, either Ernest Hollings of South Carolina or Lloyd Bentsen of Texas.

One of the ironies of the mild economic economic recovery for which the President claims credit, and which deprives the Democrats of the ideological fuel of the 1982 Congressional election victory, is that American public opinion is becoming more nervous about foreign than domestic policy. As predicted (*NS*, 4 November 1983), the surge of popular support for the President following the Grenada invasion has already evaporated – it was shallower and shorter-lived than any comparable presidential invasion in the last quarter of a century. Support for his conduct is still well below the level of support he enjoyed a year ago and below the level of support enjoyed by President Carter at the end of his third year. The proportion of the electorate which regards the threat of war as the most important national issue is now up to Vietnam War levels and the proportion of those who fear that Mr Reagan will involve the country in war is climbing to unprecedented heights. If the polls next summer predict a very close election, the President will be under pressure to produce an 'October surprise' – a dramatic peace initiative to overwhelm the electorate with relief from the tension that he himself inspires, or an equally dramatic stroke of war, another Grenada, which, however short the surge of popular opinion, would be enough to vault Mr Reagan over the top on election day, 6 November.

MR REAGAN HAS ANOTHER problem in planning his election-eve *coup de main*. He has lost the confidence of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and of a number of other senior officers of the armed services who would be obliged to plan and carry out such a surprise. This is the significance of the report by the Defense Department Commission on the Beirut bombing, released just before Christmas. Its criticism of the civilian policymaking apparatus is unprecedented since the Korean War showdown between President Truman and General MacArthur. The Pentagon has, in effect, told the President to stop ordering risky military operations to achieve poorly defined or impossible political objectives.

The commission's criticism of the paucity of 'human intelligence' (HUMINT) support for US military operations in Lebanon has triggered a parallel display of recrimination from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). At first, the professional CIA men leaked their disparagement of Mr Reagan, Mr Shultz and their personal advisors to the press in early December – before the Congressional and Defense Department investigations of the Beirut bombing had reported. Then the message was put out on the old-boy network, culminating in the joint public condemnation by former directors of Central Intelligence – William Colby and Stansfield Turner, who appeared together on television on 1 January. While the White House tried to blame the Carter administration for cutting CIA resources, the message from the Agency was that the blame rested squarely with the Reagan Administration for destroying the links that their agency had had with its Arab friends – notably those around Yasser Arafat in the PLO.

In planning a last-ditch election-saver, Mr Reagan isn't entirely without support. The Navy, which stands to lose most from the Pentagon budget if he is defeated, is probably, of the services, the most loyal to the White House at the moment; at the CIA, the directorate of operations can also be counted on for help in a wild scheme.

The problem is where to conduct the 'surprise'. Public opinion, Congressional opposition and scepticism from the army make it unlikely that, even if the Salvadoran government collapses, the administration could mount the kind of large-scale intervention with US forces that would ensure Mr Reagan's reflection. That is a battle that will have to be fought to the last Salvadoran, Honduran, Guatemalan and Hispanic mercenary on the CIA's rolls. An invasion of Nicaragua would no longer be a surprise and would be too costly (in American casualties) to be popular.

In the Middle East, the White House would hope to be safely out of Lebanon by next October. If Mr Reagan fails to bolt quickly enough, however, even the appearance of a negotiating success that preserves the Gemayel regime, or of a 'Reagan plan' for the future of the West Bank and Gaza, would be inadequate to produce the election surge he may need. In Africa, the Chad adventure of 1983 proved to have no political value at home; another clash with Libya would be almost as worthless. If he is unlucky, Mr Reagan may be obliged to despatch the Marines to rescue the regime of King Hassan of Morocco from being toppled by its military critics. In Asia, the President is in no position to save President Marcos of the Philippines.

There may be only one place left for Mr Reagan to save himself, and that is Cuba. Not that the President is likely to contemplate an invasion, but he may be desperate enough to attempt a replay of the 1962 missile crisis and naval quarantine – at the

His chest has grown 1¾″

Camera Press

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time, that was worth an enormous 13-point surge for President Kennedy.

A confrontation created by the Navy and CIA would focus on the deployment of Soviet nuclear-armed submarines off the east coast of the US. A recent leak from the Navy – whose chief of naval operations, Admiral James Watkins, is a submariner – implied that Soviet Echo-II class submarines, carrying cruise missiles with a 250-mile range, have been spotted unusually close offshore and may be based in Cuba. If the Administration wanted, it could claim that 'basing' of the Echo-IIs in Cuba would represent the stationing of Soviet strategic nuclear weapons in violation of the 1962 Kennedy-Khruschev agreement. Although even US naval manuals describe the Echo-II and its missiles as tactical anti-ship weapon systems, rather than as strategic systems, the contrivance of a crisis is all that would be required for, say, a presidentially ordered flash warning to Moscow to withdraw its Echo-II subs, a display of aerial photographs of the latest in Soviet submarine pens in Cuba, a strategic forces alert and a naval quarantine ostensibly to prevent Soviet submarines entering Cuban ports.

The great advantage of a crisis of this sort, as seen by the White House, is that no one in Moscow would take it seriously – only the American voter would be fooled. □

JEWRY

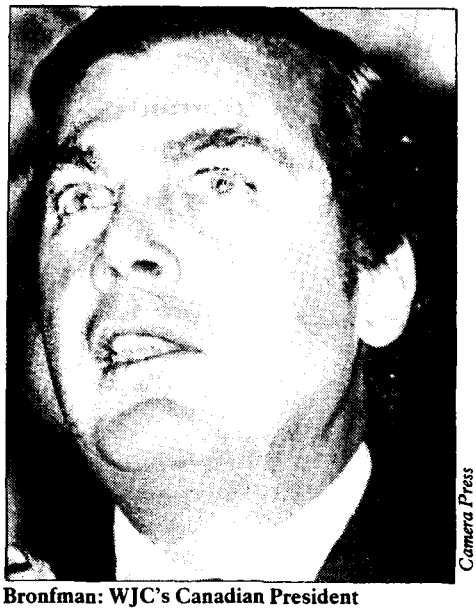
Ambassador at large

Barry Cohen interviewed Edgar Bronfman in London

ONE OF THE more significant casualties of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon last year was the traditional support for Israeli policy among *diaspora* Jews. Manifestations of dissension had actually begun before Lebanon, over issues such as Israeli settlements on the West Bank.

As head of the most important and influential body in the Jewish *diaspora* – the World Jewish Congress (WJC) – Edgar Bronfman's unconventional views on Israeli politics have attracted frequent criticism from within the Jewish establishment. In addition to his chairing of the Seagram Co. and other major Bronfman corporations, Edgar Bronfman has served as President of the WJC since 1981. He succeeded Philip Klutznick, who left the post when he was appointed Secretary of Commerce in Jimmy Carter's cabinet.

Founded in 1936 to combat the Nazi threat to European Jewry, the WJC is a voluntary association of Jewish communities in 66 countries, including Eastern Europe. While visiting London last month to attend



Camera Press

Bronfman: WJC's Canadian President

a praesidium of the World Conference on Soviet Jewry, Bronfman spoke to the *New Statesman* about his vision of Israel and contemporary Jewish matters.

'The situation of Soviet Jews is currently very bad,' Bronfman asserted. 'They are effectively being held hostage because of the worsening Cold War. So far, only 900 Jews have been allowed to emigrate this year, compared to the peak year when over 50,000 left. In response to our campaign on behalf of Soviet Jews, the Soviet Union has put the Jewish issue in the vanguard of the Cold War. But they must understand that we are not implicitly anti-Communist or anti-Soviet. On the contrary, Jews could well be in the vanguard of détente.'

Organisations concerned with Soviet Jewry have usually put their main emphasis on the issue of free emigration. Bronfman acknowledges that, if the doors were opened, about half a million Jews would happily depart. 'However, I am equally concerned with approximately one and a half million Jews who would probably choose to remain there. It would be important to obtain the same kinds of freedoms which Jews already enjoy in other Communist countries – like Hungary and Rumania.'

In order to gauge Soviet policy, Bronfman often meets with Anatoly Dobrynin, the veteran Soviet ambassador to Washington. 'He has assured me that I have an open invitation to visit the Soviet Union.' Yet Bronfman is concerned about the possibility of 'Billy Grahamisation', a reference to the way in which Billy Graham's visit resulted in a Soviet propaganda coup. 'Before going, I would want to know with whom I would be dealing and what exactly would be on the agenda.'

In recent years, the great majority of Soviet Jewish emigrés have been heading for Western countries, rather than Israel. This has sparked off a major controversy centred around a growing Israeli desire to compel Jewish emigrants to go directly to Israel. Bronfman takes a more tolerant view.

'Theoretically, family reunification is the main reason for allowing emigration, so I believe we must stick to it. From a liberal standpoint, people ought to be able to live whenever they want. After all, if my parents hadn't been allowed to leave Russia for Canada, then I wouldn't be living, today, the way that I do. Perhaps direct flights from Moscow to Tel Aviv would be the best solution. That is something I would like to discuss with the Soviet leadership.'

Bronfman has generated the most controversy by his public statements on Israel's policies in the occupied territories. To some degree, his liberal perspective has been shaped by his mentor, Nahum Goldmann, who founded the WJC and served as its President for 28 years. 'I loved Goldmann,' he remarked nostalgically. 'He was a second father to me.'

Current Israeli policy, which is leading to an irreversible annexation of the West Bank, concerns Bronfman deeply. If this trend continues, Israel will become either a very partial Jewish state or an apartheid system. 'I believe the Camp David process is the key to peace. The movement toward economic integration between the occupied territories and Israel is surely bound to grow. During the five-year transition envisioned by Camp David, both peoples could learn, at least, not to distrust each other. Israeli occupation simply breeds more and more hatred. If I were in a government policy-making position, I would bend over backwards to work towards a loose confederation between Israel and the Palestinian territories.'

Bronfman holds mixed views regarding Israel's argument for retaining the West Bank on security grounds. 'I have flown over the entire West Bank and I've seen an immense number of uninhabited high points which Israel could initially retain as defence positions. It's hard for Europeans to realise that Israel constitutes such a tiny area. So, I can understand the Israeli paranoia. And I hasten to add that paranoids have enemies too. In Israel's case, they are only a few kilometres away.

'The supposed need to retain the Jordan River boundary is really a rather weak security argument. You could leap across it. Remember, we easily crossed the Rhine in World War II when warfare wasn't nearly as efficient as it is today.'

Hoping to promote the Arab-Israeli peace process, Bronfman has held frequent meetings with major leaders in the Arab world. He has developed particularly close relations with the late President Sadat and his successor, Hosni Mubarak, as well as King Hassan of Morocco. His experience of quiet diplomacy has convinced him that, despite the loud rhetoric, 'I have never met a single Arab leader who genuinely wanted a completely independent Palestinian state in the region.'

Responding to his Jewish critics, Bronfman emphasises his 'devotion' to Israel's survival. Nevertheless, he believes in the necessity of 'a really new dialogue' between Israel and *diaspora* Jewry. 'If I criticise Israeli policy (and I said this to Begin many times although I'm not sure he believed me), it's only because I think it's wrong in terms of the stated goals of security and prosperity. But, Begin was a difficult person. He was convinced he had the ear of God in preference to everybody else.' □

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Peace missiles

Jan Kavan on the effects of the deployment of SS20s

REPRESSION IS nothing new in occupied Czechoslovakia, but following the Soviet decision to deploy SS20s there the situation of human rights and peace activists has taken a sharp turn for the worse. For the first time since the Soviet invasion of 1968, a single political issue has caused widespread disquiet among the population, which goes well beyond the confines of the Charter 77 human rights movement.

According to reports from Czechoslovakia, the decision to deploy Soviet missiles there has already provoked several protest letters and petitions. One such letter, said to have originated in the Moravian capital Brno, has allegedly attracted about 1,000 signatures, most of them belonging to young people with no links to Charter 77 and for whom this was the first political act in 'normalised' Czechoslovakia. Interrogations of Brno school students, which started two weeks ago, continue, and criticism of the Soviet missiles and other peace activities seem to be the main subject of the interrogations.

A petition calling for an end to the arms race and condemning the deployment of all weapons of mass destruction, including Soviet ones in Czechoslovakia, has recently begun to circulate. So far, it has been signed by hundreds of people – about half of them Chartists – including Václav Havel; Dr Jaroslav Sabata, former member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and today one of the most prominent Charter 77 leaders; Anna Sabatová, a leading activist of VONS (Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Prosecuted); Václav Malý, a Catholic clergyman and a former Charter 77 spokesperson; a Jesuit Father Frantisek Lízna and several clergymen of the Czech Evangelical Church. A clandestine group, the Preparatory Committee of the Free Trade Unions in Czechoslovakia, has also issued a statement calling on trade unionists to oppose the deployment of missiles.

The Czechoslovak government was unlucky that the Kremlin reached its decision on the deployment of SS20s in 1983 – a year in which Czechoslovakia spearheaded one-sided attacks against US missiles in Western Europe, played host to an ostentatious World Peace Assembly and subjected its population to a continuous barrage of peace propaganda. At the same time, the authorities launched their biggest attack so far on all forms of popular music perceived as non-conformist: jazz, rock, punk, even popular folk songs. Last June, when police clashed with hundreds of young people following a ban on a rock concert, they were confronted with shouts of 'We want peace!' and 'We want freedom!' Many young people were arrested and some sentenced to terms of up to 20 months' imprisonment. The government is clearly worried that spontaneous peace slogans adopted by an increasingly alienated youth, and the appearance of protest petitions signed mainly by young people, could lead to the birth of an authentic unofficial peace movement in Czechoslovakia.

Aware that, at least on the issue of Soviet missiles, such a movement would have many *potential* supporters throughout the country, including some ordinary Party members, the authorities are anxious to nip in the bud these growing protests and especially any attempt to coordinate them. Meanwhile, they have launched a mass media campaign arguing that the deployment is a necessary response to US missiles in Western Europe, that the Soviet missiles are 'peace missiles' and that the deployment was, in any case, a decision of the highest authority – which therefore precludes any doubts, let alone criticism.

IF A SIGNIFICANT effect of the deployment of Soviet missiles in Czechoslovakia has been the authorities' evident concern about the larger scale of public reaction to this issue, one of its more ominous consequences has been the increased level of repression directed at human rights activists. Last month, 31-year-old worker Jirí Wolf, a Charter 77 signatory known for his consistent support of workers' rights, was sentenced to six years' imprisonment. This is the longest sentence meted out to a human rights activist since 1972 and, since Wolf has already served three years' imprisonment for disseminating Charter 77 documents among fellow-workers, his time in Husák's jails will equal that of the revolutionary Marxist Petr Uhl. The severity of Wolf's sentence can be interpreted as a veiled warning to any citizens who openly express their opinion on the deployment issue in the coming months.

Leading Charter 77 activists, especially those involved in the almost two-year-old dialogue with the Western peace movement, were warned explicitly by the secret police (STB) in early November that any Charter 77 statement on deployment would lead to prosecution for the very serious crime of 'undermining national defence capability'. The Chartists informed the Western peace movements of this threat in an open letter, the importance of which was underlined by the fact that it was signed not only by current Charter 77 spokespersons, but also by Rudolf Battek and Ladislav Lis – two spokespersons now in prison. The Charter leaders reiterated their support for the peace movement's efforts to pressure the superpowers to disarm and underlined that the struggle for peace must be an integral part of an endeavour to observe human rights.

In its latest documents, Charter 77 pointed out that, in light of the deployment of Soviet missiles, the government's past verbal support for Western peace movements must be regarded as nothing but an instrumental attempt to 'weaken the opposing side'.

Some Western peace movements have begun to respond to Charter's open letter, although the degree of support for the Chartists' position obviously differs from country to country, from group to group. Two weeks ago, CND sent a letter to Charter 77 in which it agreed that the Czechoslovak government's acceptance of Soviet nuclear missiles implies that its previous support for the peace movement 'was not genuine'. CND stressed the importance of laws which 'guarantee the rights of individuals to life and liberty'. It congratulated the Chartists for their 'courageous stand' and expressed its support for their 'defence of the rights of citizens to work for peace'.

This letter is a step in the right direction. However, it must be followed by consistent and sincere initiatives from the Western peace movements which vigorously support the *indivisibility* of peace and human rights and condemn the nuclear weapons of *both* superpowers. This is a precondition for the formulation of a joint long-term political strategy which would eventually lead to a secure, just, democratic and unified Europe free of repression, political prisoners and threats of nuclear holocaust. □

THIS ENGLAND

£3 book tokens for entries printed. (On postcards, please.)

□ The course of a major international cross-country race at Ipswich has been altered so that runners will not disturb bats roosting in giant rhododendron bushes. – *Daily Mail* (M. G. Balston)

□ A British Rail worker tried to blackmail his former boss by threatening to tell his wife about an extra-marital affair. But when Trevor Gard was caught he told police he had chosen his victim 'because it was the only name I could spell'. – *Greenwich & Eltham Mercury* (John Garrett)

□ Zzitz Z. Z., of Stoke Newington, who held the distinction of being the final entry in the London telephone directory for two years, has been ousted in the new edition by a Zzvtt B. I. When I rang to break the bad news, I was told Mrs Zzitz was not in. When would she be back? 'She doesn't actually exist', said the voice. The former subscriber apparently 'just wanted to be last in the book.' – *Daily Telegraph* (George Moor)

□ There is also growth in the number of funeral directors offering pre-payment schemes, some under the heading 'Pay as you live', while others simply accept the funeral order and leave payment until the time comes.

'It really is quite the norm to have an NYD file – Not Yet Dead – in which these arrangements are kept', said Mr Colin Field of the National Association of Funeral Directors. – *Daily Scotsman* (Mary M. Simpson)

□ Coun Dennis Pettitt, leader of the council, said house prices in Chilwell had gone up because people knew that in the event of a nuclear war they would be 'incinerated instantly' in that area and would not suffer lingering deaths as on the outskirts. – *Nottingham Evening Post* (H. Woodward)

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LETTERS

Militant in Liverpool

Peter Cresswell, Secretary, Liverpool City Council Joint Stewards Committee

In his eagerness to score points off 'Militant' in general, and Derek Hatton in particular, Bob Dent manages, in quite spectacular fashion, to miss the point about what is happening to Liverpool City Council (*NS* 16/23 December).

I am far from being a 'Militant' supporter, and the trade union members whom this Committee represents range from Tories to Trotskyists – we encompass teachers, binmen, clerks and electricians. Yet, among all these employees of Liverpool City Council, there is a growing realisation that the confrontation towards which the Council is heading is unavoidable.

In brief, the City Council – by whoever it is led – has three choices. It can choose whether to confront the government (by refusing to make a 'legal' budget), the ratepayers (by doubling the rates), or the City Council workforce (by sacking thousands of us). A few statistics explain why this is the case. If the Labour Group decided just to 'stand still' (i.e. no growth, but no implementation of the £6m cuts the Liberals had planned for 1983), they would need to raise the rates by around 70 per cent. To carry out their full programme, the rate rise needed to compensate for the Tories' vast grant penalties would be around 120 per cent. If, however, they chose to conform more or less to the government's guidelines, they would have to 'save' around £30m. This would mean axing up to 5,000 jobs.

That does not represent much of a choice, and I'm afraid that this issue dwarfs the question of whether the new Security Chief is Derek Hatton's neighbour. Perhaps Bob Dent can now see why the Liverpool City Council Joint Stewards Committee has not adopted a 'formal position vis-à-vis the looming confrontation'. *We don't need to.* We know that we are going to have to fight for our lives in 1984 – and, whether we have to fight the council, the government or commissioners, fight we will.

Paul Thompson, Liverpool

There are a number of problems of style and content associated with the policies of the new Labour Council in Liverpool, and some of these were rightly illustrated in Bob Dent's article 'Mersey Militants'. However, as someone identified in the article as on the receiving end of the Militant majority, I regard the overall perspective as negative and one-sided. For example, Bob fails to distinguish between the opposition on the question of co-ops to that concerning the education plans. The former was genuine working-class dissent to a mistaken policy, while the latter is a largely conservative reaction to a necessary and radical plan to provide the first real comprehensive education in the city (and is based on mixed, *not* single sex schools). The so-called city-wide campaigning group is a front for the Liberals and Tories.

Overall, the impression given of a beleaguered and isolated council is misleading. The reference to a 20 per cent Labour vote as indicating lack of public support, in one of the few cities where there has been a substantial shift *to* Labour, is frankly absurd. More importantly, the recent 20,000 strong demonstration was notable for the enthusiastic and friendly support of people watching, many of whom recognise the need to support the council's stand regardless of any other reservations they may have.

Finally, the article fails to point out that, whatever the other political divisions in the party, we are all united behind the current strategy of confronting the government. This is not a position of 'principled bankruptcy', but a product of our conditions after a decade of disastrous Liberal/Tory rule in the city. The danger of Bob's article is that it will provide excuses to let the Labour leadership off the hook when it comes to supporting this vital battle in defence of local democracy and services.

When giants shake hands

Steve Dawe, Convenor, Ecology Party Foreign Policy Working Group

Anthony Barnett's 'A meeting of giants' (*NS* 16/23 December) seems to me to neglect a critical aspect of Asia's future should Russia and China form a closer relationship.

These two states have made considerable efforts to cultivate the good will of India and Pakistan respectively. If a formal agreement were concluded between them, India's relationship with China might improve (although talks with China during my stay in India for 15 months up to January 1983 encourage pessimism, while the idea of a Sino-Soviet thaw was viewed with anxiety both in the Parliament and outside. More worrying is the behaviour of Pakistan if such an agreement were to occur, particularly if India were reconciled to China.

Pakistan under Zia is the beneficiary of one of the USA's largest arms and aid programmes – chiefly because of Afghanistan. Anything which caused an intensification of the existing arms race between India and Pakistan can only be viewed with grave apprehension since it now seems that both these states have a nuclear weapons capability. Zia is exactly the stereotype dictator likely to be the first user of nuclear weapons in warfare since Nagasaki. It is noteworthy that the USA has already cut off all nuclear technology assistance to Pakistan. How any Sino-Soviet rapprochement is viewed in New Dehli and Karachi is infinitely more important than how it may be viewed in Hanoi.

Orwell that ends well

John Bradbrook, London N1

Given the tendency to regard George Orwell as some kind of latter-day, secular saint, then Beatrix Campbell's 'Wigan Pier and beyond' (*NS* 16/23 December) ought to have been some kind of a welcome change. Yet I doubt if even Beatrix Campbell would dispute the aptness and relevance of your excellent 'Doubleplusgood 1984' front cover. There must be something in a writer who has contributed so much to political language and ideas.

The article starts off with a journalistic equivalent of the pre-emptive strike, describing Orwell as 'a socialist who was best known for his anti-socialism'. This must surely be a case of 'the bigger the lie the more likely it is to be believed'. Orwell's most popular book, *Animal Farm*, is a satire on the *betrayal* of socialism, not on socialism itself. It is an attack on the way that the fine ideal of human equality can be betrayed by a ruthless, corrupt, self-perpetuating, oligarchic clique – as, indeed, happened in the Soviet Union. It is easy to forget that, in the 1930s, the Communist Party and its fellow travellers had a sort of intellectual hegemony on the left, with many (not perhaps without their own doubts) being prepared to ignore or excuse such crimes against humanity as the liquidation of the kulaks and the purges in the interests of 'socialism'.

It is not for nothing that the illegal Solidarnosc underground parodies the official slogan 'Razem do socjalizm' (together to socialism) with 'Gazem do socjalizmu' (with tear gas to socialism). Orwell would surely have approved of such popular ironical resistance to the official voice of authority.

It is odd that this article contains no reference to Orwell's involvement in the Spanish Civil War, where he was prepared to put his life on the line for the socialist cause as he understood it. He certainly had his weaknesses, such as his stereotyped view of sex roles, his peculiar ambivalence towards the working class and his odd prejudice towards people who like drinking fruit juice. Yet, as a non-bearded and not especially bright ecologist, I would say that there was much of value in Orwell's 'rant about socialism' in the second half of *The Road to Wigan Pier*. It contains his critique of the worship of the machine, of the idea that progress is always beneficial and of the 'productionist' belief that a civilisation can be measured in terms of the millions of tons pig iron it turns out. In that sense, Orwell prefigured, rather than dismissed, modern environmentalist consciousness. All in all, we could do with more writers of Orwell's honesty, clarity and commitment today.

Leslie Moody, London SE3

It is not often that I have the pleasure of reading an article with every word of which I agree without reservation. I have to thank Beatrix Campbell on Orwell (*NS* 16/23 December) for this rare privilege.

In all of my 40-plus years in the trade union and labour movement I have never been able to understand why so many of my friends on the Left have been prepared to give Orwell house room. Was it, I have asked myself, simply some cap-doffing gratitude to an Old Etonian who was prepared to say something sympathetic about the poor and underprivileged? So what? The Liberal Party's full of them. Orwell never loved the working class for what they *were* but what he, in his petit-bourgeois idealism, thought they ought to have been. When he discovered that trade unions and Left political parties were all about seeking power (because, without it, all talk of ending capitalist oppression was so much intellectual crap), he drew up his middle-class skirts and recoiled in horror. Beatrix Campbell got it exactly right when she said: 'There might seem little in (his) view of the working class that a compassionate, upper class Tory would not share'.

Orwell's reaction to these discoveries was entirely predictable. All of his resentment and sense of rejection were spewed into obscenities like *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty Four*. As his publisher, Frederick Warburg, put it, the latter was 'a deliberate, sadistic attack on Socialism and socialist parties generally, worth a cool million votes to the Conservative Party'. Despite all that might be said by his apologists, like Professor Bernard Crick, it remains a fact that Orwell would have done less harm to the working-class movement if he had remained firmly entrenched in his own class, become a Tory MP and sat on the Bench dispensing Tory justice to his social inferiors. 1984 is the year for socialists to consign Orwell to the dustbin of history.

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Out of the Kitching

Suzy Croft, Co-organiser, Battersea Community Action.

Gavin Kitching is to be praised for trying to raise the issue of 'socialism' and 'socialists'' isolation (*NS* 16/23 December). But, speaking as an unemployed woman, bringing up three small children in inadequate rented housing in a government victimised inner-city area, I take exception to some of the important assumptions on which his article is based. These assumptions not only run through the article, but through Labour and Left thinking. That is why it is essential to challenge them.

First, the patronising view that Labour activists are ideologically separated from working-class people who are tied to belief in male chauvinism, imperialist adventures, sale of public assets, racism, law-and-order policies and so on and so on. Could we remind ourselves that it is Hobsbawm and some of the Left who urge the reappropriation of patriotism; that it is the influential Labour Co-ordinating Committee that is at present pushing for council house sales and that Labour and other Left parties themselves are rooted in hidden (if not always explicit) racism, sexism, handicappism and ageism. Just look at the composition of their membership and leadership.

What I would suggest is that many working-class people are not in need of ideological advancement from their 'socialist' betters, but they are in fact often ideologically ahead of them. The problem for them is that the Labour Party and the Left have failed to offer them the room and the opportunities to develop such ideas together, so that they often remain hidden and privately expressed. Furthermore, ordinary working-class people are increasingly denied the meeting places and the public platforms, as well as access to print and electronic media, to communicate, share and develop their points of view.

In 1978, we made a large-scale survey of what local people in North Battersea felt about the say they had in the then Left Labour local authority; about the plans being made for them and their own ideas for services to meet their needs. They painted a picture of virtually complete powerlessness, while, at the same time, the ideas of local working-class people, black and white, women and men, young and old, represented a far more popularly based and radical manifesto than anything we've ever seen from the Labour Party. Since then, working and in discussion with many other groups of different working-class people in London and elsewhere, this same kind of grass roots radicalism has repeatedly emerged.

We don't need the kind of local surveys Kitching suggests. They are one-sided and individualising. Even if they put Labour Party activists in closer touch with local people – to some electoral advantage – it's still likely to be a case of what is made of the information, its interpretation and whose property it is, remaining very much with the narrow band of self-identified 'socialists'. What is actually needed is a surrender by would-be socialists of their often unacknowledged belief that *they* should be the architects of socialism. Access must be given to make possible the broad-based involvement of people so that they can determine the shape of socialist organisation, relations, structures and policies, according to their own various wants and demands. It won't be easy, but it alone represents a real socialist aspiration and, without it, we will not see socialism here. Nor will it result in the much-feared popular reaction that many socialists seem to suspect. That has far more regularly come from the Left itself.

Beatrix Campbell's article about George Orwell, while apparently retrospective, says far more about what's wrong with socialism and in what ways it needs to change than does Kitching's. Not surprisingly, it's by a woman rather than a middle-class male academic.

Paul R. White, Cambs

As an exploited factory labourer and, less tautologically, an active member of the Labour Party, I was impressed by Gavin Kitching's

perceptive article concerning the failure of socialists to represent people who suffer most from the absence of socialism.

Perhaps the most frustrating aspect of the electorate's alienation from radical politics is the consequent manipulation of working-class aspirations by members of the Thatcher government, who *do* understand the basics of human motivation. People whose behaviour and personal values are generally compatible with socialism, particularly in a working environment, are repelled by the intolerance and apparent hypocrisy of socialists who seem willing to replace one form of oppression with another.

In such a situation, with brutal weapons such as the media, unemployment and (increasingly) the law, a Tory government capitalises on the greed, cynicism and fear of disillusioned people. Sufferers of Thatcherism instinctively reject its ruthless immorality, but prefer the devil they know to an aloof and dishonest one.

Talking and listening are certainly difficult, but they offer far more hope than the extravagant hobbies of well-meaning intellectuals, or the revolutionary schemes of spoilt brats of the trendy Left.

Dave Bradney, London NW6

Thanks for Gavin Kitching's 'Talking to ourselves.' I hope you'll publish more critical and thoughtful articles of this kind. But, even so, it did not go far enough.

Anyone flunking any part of the unofficial leftie checklist can expect either an embarrassed silence, or a moralistic ticking-off, and, ultimately, will be told that he or she is no socialist. It is therefore fairly brave of Kitching to say that he would like to work with such people. But, at the point where he has to explain *why*, he can only say that it is 'not because I agree with them, but because there is something a lot more important than agreement or disagreement at stake here' (viz: 'the capacity of the Labour Party effectively to represent and shape the attitudes and views of a large constituency of British people').

This neatly diverts the argument into a discussion about tactics. But what about the possibility that some of these people might be *right*? What most lefties will never accept, or even recognise as an issue, is that their version of the truth is just their version of the truth. This presumed correctness is the source of many lefties' off-putting arrogance and self-righteousness. It is also the reason why many people, quite understandably, doubt the Left's commitment to democracy.

Presumed correctness would be no big deal if it was confined to the Left sects; unfortunately, it has become endemic on the Left and in the women's movement. What to do about this, I dunno. All I can say, at the moment, is that I have stopped calling myself a libertarian socialist and started calling myself a socialist libertarian. And, yes, to save several of your readers the trouble of writing in, I do realise that changing what I call myself is not of itself a sufficient response.

Oliver Owen, Hove, Sussex

My experience of our society seems to be very different from Gavin Kitching's. Some of my best friends belong to the groups he mentions – white collar professionals, teachers, etc – but I am not one of them. Some of my contacts are businessmen and, ever since I was a kid, I have had working-class friends – my Dad sent me to a council school in a poorish area, on principle, and because that is how he began his own education. Then there was life in the services.

I suggest that, if Labour Party activists are ideologically distant from voters who do or might vote Labour, it is because the latter do not have anything describable as ideology at all, and will not have, foreseeably. It is hard fact. But do not worry about it; they do not. They do not expect political people to be like them, it is not the point. The same goes for 'representativeness', a term which I find gets more mysterious the longer I think about it.

The Tory government is made up of people highly unrepresentative, especially of the many workers who voted for them; what is more, so were past, more typically traditional Conservative governments. The point is whether a government makes a good job of running the show: whether it strengthens peace and the economy. Ideology scarcely comes into it, except in helping a politician or party understand society and, thus, improve it. If Labour can offer voters more and better paid jobs, more convincingly than the Tories, it will rule again.

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Jim McGuigan

Consumer council

Colin Wheeler

Thirty-eighth Annual Report and Accounts 1982/83
Arts Council of Great Britain £2

The present government rules by fear, constantly threatening, often obliquely, that there is much worse yet to come. Nowhere is anxiety generated more easily than in the publicly subsidised arts. So far, however, the main effect of monetarism and efficiency mania on the Arts Council and its associated agencies has been that of cultural discipline rather than any really shocking financial cutbacks.

Since 1979 the annual parliamentary grant-in-aid has increased steadily, not to expand operations but to hold them in a twitching stasis while the axe hovers menacingly overhead. In 1980-81, the first year that Thatcherite Conservatives were responsible for setting the figure, it was £71 million, and in 1984-85 it will reach £100 million. Of course, this is not enough, as nearly everyone in the arts world would agree, but it is not too bad either. In fact, it is surprisingly good considering the alarm and despondency that have pervaded the same period.

When the Conservatives were elected there was widespread anxiety about the threat of 'privatisation'. Voices on the extreme Right actually challenged the very principle of 'public patronage of the arts'. Although the government never endorsed the Kingsley Amis position, pressure was put on the Arts Council to encourage and accommodate to business sponsorship wherever possible. This duly happened but subsidy from that source has stuck at about a tenth the size of the Arts Council budget.

Last year, Luke Rittner, the enfant terrible from ABSA, switched sides by succeeding Roy Shaw as the Arts Council's Secretary General. With William Rees-Mogg's appointment as Chairman the previous year this completed the replacement of a social democratic leadership with a conservative leadership. It does not constitute subversion of public subsidy for the arts as such.

Over the last few months 'threats' have mounted thick and fast. Rittner sent out a letter to 200 organisations asking them what they might do with either a grant increase or a decrease of 25 per cent, which is generally thought to be a ploy for sifting out the chaff from the wheat. This is linked with a move to end customary 'freehold' grants for most organisations and to formalise subsidy on a temporary 'leasehold' basis so that money can be rechannelled according to performance. That, in itself, is not an entirely novel tactic. In December 1980, 41 subsidised organisations were cut off in spite of the fact that the grant-in-aid for 1981-82 was to be increased by 12 per cent. Some favoured organisations actually received substantially higher funding than before as a result.

Now we have the rumblings around the Priestley reports on the Royal Opera House and the Royal Shakespeare Company that are supposed to have frightened Rees-Mogg and Rittner. Clive Priestley's recommendation that 'the national companies', usually referred to as 'the big four', should be financed directly from the Treasury would, if implemented, take away the Arts Council's main historical function, and for that reason is a very remote possibility indeed.

None of this, however, is anything like as threatening as the proposed demolition of the GLC and the metropolitan councils that contribute an estimated £30 million to the arts. The effect on arts funding in London and the regions might well be devastating. But, what will be devastated? Lord Gowrie, Arts Minister and Treasury hatchet man, has promised to make up the shortfall, through the Arts Council, for 'the lucky nine': National Theatre, London Festival Ballet, the four London orchestras, English National Opera (South and North), Royal Exchange Theatre and Halle Orchestra in Manchester, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. What Gowrie says will not necessarily happen. Nevertheless, it is very probable that such 'centres of excellence' will survive more or less intact.

Actually threatened, though, are culturally much less 'safe' organisations and practices ranging from the Liverpool Everyman to locality-based arts projects on the outer rim of respectability. In recognition of this discriminating effect, Tony Banks, GLC arts supremo, has responded with his own threat to maintain 'responsibility to those arts activities which the government neither wishes to support nor the Boroughs are able to' by diverting funds from 'national centres' to 'community-based arts' in the precious time that is still left.

As threat and counter-threat collide, the recently published Arts Council annual report for 1982-83 offers only minimal illumi-

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nation. The anodyne prose and detailed accounts in annual reports are not designed to grip the reader's attention or to reveal the deeper processes beneath the public relations facade. £91,300,000 was divided up in the usual way. £10,794,000 went to Scotland and £6,703,000 to Wales. Of the remaining £70,676,203 for England, £26,444,682 was spent on the so-called 'national companies'. Even after the devolution of 'Community Arts', all twelve Regional Arts Associations received only £10,616,783 between them. Rees-Mogg's introduction to the report admits a regional imbalance but he insists that high standards can be achieved only on a solid London base. It is a very wide base, to judge from a recent Policy Studies Institute study which concludes that 'about half of the Arts Council's general expenditure in England subsidises activities in London'.

The most interesting item in the current Arts Council annual report is Roy Shaw's valedictory as Secretary General. It is a useful summary of the now passé consensual rhetoric of arts policy that he and Richard Hoggart clung to desperately in the late Seventies and early Eighties. 'Developing access to the arts' is reasserted against what Shaw considers to be the 'strangely' similar threats from cultural democrats on the Left and laissez-faire reactionaries on the Right.

Reviewing the history of the Arts Council, Shaw discusses the shift from the 1950s emphasis on 'raising' standards to the 1960s reforms that inaugurated an era of 'spreading' access. Shaw connects the latter position to his own scholarship-boy background and career in adult education before committing himself to it as Secretary General of the Arts Council. He invites a sardonic response by remarking: 'I had been to school with Matthew Arnold', the prophet of cultural dissemination through education. When he became Secretary General in 1974 the Arts Council was doing little about education for arts appreciation. Shaw's mission was to rectify this failure to make up for the unequal effect of schooling which left working-class people without the sense of cultural discrimination to enable them to consume 'the arts'. His solution was to employ an 'education liaison officer', not with Arts Council money but with a grant from Gulbenkian. As late as 1982-83 the Council spent only £37,767 on education, a paltry sum for 'developing understanding of the arts' to 'increase their accessibility', which Shaw claims as his legacy to the Arts Council.

The radical alternatives to this hesitant paternalism proposed by cultural democrats like Su Braden and John McGrath in the 1970s are dismissed cursorily as 'doing your own thing', although Shaw does admit that the established arts still appeal, after decades of disseminationist zeal, only to a small minority. He resisted efforts to transform arts policy that would enable subordinate groups to engage in *production* rather than learning to *consume* received culture. Shaw succeeded to the extent that community and popular arts are now in danger of being excluded entirely from public patronage. That may well turn out to be his true legacy. □

NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT
M. H. Ryle

Something new?

Crisis over Cruise
PHILIP WEBBER, GRAEME WILKINSON and BARRY RUBIN *Penguin* £1.25
The Disarmer's Handbook of Military Technology and Organization
ANDREW WILSON *Penguin* £2.50
The Economics of Militarism
DAN SMITH and RON SMITH *Pluto* £3.50
The Final Decade: Will we Survive the 1980s?
CHRISTOPHER LEE *Sphere* £2.50

Books on war and weapons, particularly nuclear weapons, continue to proliferate. Some of them, mere catalogues of gleaming hardware, can be classed with the glossy military mags to be found on station bookstalls; but many, across the political spectrum, are serious and informative. The basic data and arguments have, however, now been ably set forth in several publications (if I had to name one, I would plump for Penguin's *Defended to Death*, edited by Gwyn Prins for the Cambridge University Disarmament Seminar). New titles should henceforth offer fresh information or argument, or should aim for a fresh readership.

Crisis over Cruise falls into the last category. As a Penguin special, it must hope for a wider public than will be reached by the pamphlets on the same topic now out from END (by Andrew White) and CND (by Owen Greene). Timed to precede the Greenham and Comiso deployments, it goes beyond immediate military implications to indicate their diplomatic, strategic and technical context. It's a useful brief guide, but I would expect even the uninformed or uncommitted reader to be struck by its reticence about the political struggles which must precede the achievement of the authors' proposed solutions (a nuclear freeze and associated multilateral measures, plus unilateral British renunciation of cruise and Trident). There are no references to political parties, and no discussion of the contradictory pattern in which large and growing western European disarmament movements have failed to bring about the election of a single anti-missile government.

The pertinence of political discussion even to a 'basic case' text is clear when one recalls that in fact the peace movement has not needed to win the argument against cruise: right from the beginning, most Britons have been against deployment. The task of the movement is not now to rehearse the case for rejection, but to win active support for different policies – policies which the Labour Party must now develop, and which will extend across the entire terrain of defence, conventional as well as nuclear, and beyond. As Andrew Wilson's erudite and thoughtful **Handbook** reminds one time and again, nuclear militarism is not in truth a 'single issue'; it opens up a range of fundamental interlocking questions. How are we to define security, and what alternative defence will best preserve it? Can we move beyond the perilous stability of cold war without engendering still more perilous instability? What new relations between north and south might replace the present stranglehold of hyper-militarised inequality and exploitation?

In their incisive and readable analysis of the bases and consequences of high military spending, Dan Smith and Ron Smith take up one such question. Given the centrality in advanced economies of the armaments sector – in Britain alone, 1.3m jobs are at stake – how can disarmament be managed so as to yield economic benefits? The authors argue that British 'industrial disarmament' should be integrated into some version of the Alternative Economic Strategy, and should involve authentic workplace democracy and detailed consultation with new users of converted military plant. They insist, however, that these are not purely technical or economic matters, since militarism, though disfunctional in their view even in a capitalist economy, offers political and ideological advantages to the ruling class. On a world scale, the new cold war is at once political, military and economic; it stems in part from America's attempt to reassert hegemony over its rivals by forcing them to raise their arms budgets and by tying them ever more tightly into a defence alliance controlled by Washington. Whether we can cut through this noose before it hangs us depends on 'the degree of popular support for disarmament'. And the support in turn depends on the development of non-utopian disarmament strategies.

All these works come from within the peace movement. They represent a voice which is growing firmer and more confident, but which still goes unheard by most of the establishment, of which Christopher Lee may be taken as one representative. His job as the BBC's Defence Correspondent gives an adventitious documentary interest to a chatty and ill-organised work. It's notable, for instance, that he appears never to have read a single serious statement of the anti-nuclear case. You will not find CND in his index (where room *is* found for something called the Campaign for Civil Defence), though he is not above repeating the unsubstantiated allegation that the KGB has financed disarmament activity in Britain.

I suppose this is consistent with his allegiance to the defence elite and his regard for its experts: unsure whether Trident is a Good Thing, he gives up the question to 'those in very senior positions, with ultra-classified evidence'. It's consistent, certainly, with his condescension towards 'the average man in the street' for whom – perhaps you had guessed – 'defence is a complicated business'. I was naive enough to hope that even a busy Defence Correspondent would have remarked that there had been rather a lot of us (and even a few 'average women') in the street of late. Clearly, however, our numbers remain insufficient. □

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PAPERBACKS
Alan Brien

Our times

HAVING DUCKED for almost a quarter of a century, 1951 to 1975, Anthony Powell's 12-part novel, unrolled under the banner **A Dance to the Music of Time** – a rubric that seemed to me at once pretentious and almost meaningless, echoing even to its rhythms 'A la Recherche du Temps Perdu/Remembrance of Things Past' – I have at last caught up with it in paperback. The sequence is now reprinted by Flamingo (individual volumes £2.50 or £2.95; vols 1-6 boxed at £16.50, vols 7-12 at £17.95).

Despite the weight of tributes on the covers ('I would rather read Mr Powell than any English novelist now writing' – Kingsley Amis), I found it very light going, even though the path was littered with rather daintily cut clods of cultural reference. The opening pages read like a Proustian parody in a literary competition.

We are asked to visualise a road-mending gang of workmen, first in terms of Shakespearean clowns, then as survivors from an antique world –

> Legionaries in sheepskin warming themselves at a brazier: mountain altars where offerings glow between wintry pillars; centaurs with torches cantering beside a frozen sea . . .

– then as Poussin's capering allegories from the painting in the Wallace Collection which gives the serial its over-all title.

When we come down to everyday reality, we are then invited to believe that they have been feasting on, of all snacks likely to be cooked and eaten with bare fingers over an open fire, a pair of kippers. From then on, through schooldays and early manhood, Soho lunches and country-house weekends, dull social climbing and tepid love affairs, the style alternates between the purple patches of up-market ad-man's copy and the civil-service grey of detailed memoranda about tiny emotional crises.

The hero is at best an endearing creep, even more mysteriously popular among his mechanically colourful friends than Charles Ryder, a 'Herr Issyvoo' with a low blood count. The effect is as of a third-carbon of Waugh. I turned the pages like an automaton, the way you finish a family-size packet of crisps, to avoid waste.

For a genre painting of a Britain I recognise, full of pop-up grotesques who grip you by the lapel with boozey intimacy, I much prefer Anthony Burgess's **The Right to an Answer** (Hutchinson, £4.50) whose scenes from provincial life in the Fifties are etched with a marvellous, slapdash vigour, fuelled by boredom and frustration. Physical energy also lights up the Flaxborough Chronicles series of Colin Watson, among them, in Methuen paperback, **One Man's Meat, Hopjoy Was Here** and **Coffin Scarcely Used** (£2.50 each). Here are detective stories, grounded in Fenland towns and villages, which subtly record changing habits, snobberies and fads, yet also set ingenious crime puzzles among nympho housewives, scheming businessmen and hypocritical local politicians, solved with wit and intelligence.

For real life, and lives, I turn with added appetite to biographies. There is a lot to be said for the brief, succinct, packed study, like the four latest Irish portraits in the Gill & Macmillan series (£3.95 each) – Bernard Tucker's **Jonathan Swift,** Richard Pine's **Oscar Wilde,** Augustine Martin's **W. B. Yeats,** and John O'Donovan's **G. B. Shaw.** No matter that I thought I had learned all I wanted to know about all of them in much fatter, scholarly, definite works, these summations, potting all the predecessors, mainline all the essentials like a police dossier.

There is much that is new, to me – I had never taken in that Swift was English on both sides; or to anybody – Queensbury's card to Wilde is printed correctly for the first time as 'posing sodomite' with the 'as a' omitted. And since the latter three were contemporaries, acquaintances or friends, their public and private careers entangle and overlap so that we eventually obtain a stereoscopic panorama of an era through three differently focussed pairs of eyes.

'P.P., K.I.B.S.' James Agate used occasionally to inscribe after his name – Perpetual President, Kafka Is Balls Society. And dipping into Penguin's two massive collections of Kafka fiction, **The Complete Novels** (£4.95) and **The Complete Short Stories** (£3.95), I found these obsessive anxiety-dreams often more potent in the part than in the whole. Sometimes a sentence appears able to petrify the reader, striking you cold with an inability to read on, like a flake of blue asbestos. As with Painter's masterly biography of Proust, Ronald Hayman's equally omniverous **Kafka** (Abacus, £3.25) so mixes and interpenetrates the man and the works that you feel you need never open his books again, so deeply have you been locked beneath his skin.

America, as Kafka foresaw, is where Europe's yesterdays become its tomorrow. I was a little sceptical of the claims on the blurb that Edmund Fawcett and Tony Thomas's **America and the Americans** (Fontana, £2.95) would provide the Old Moore's Almanack for the Eighties that Gunther's *Inside USA* was for the Forties, and somewhat under-impressed by discovering that the most enthusiastic quotes on front and back covers came from reviewers who were thanked, among the acknowledgements inside, for their help and advice. But the pair have devoured and ordered all their research in a fashion that makes Gunther look amateurish. Just the chapter on 'Television and the Press' was enough to convince me that this is an essential reference work for anyone who wants to know what else will descend upon us from across the Atlantic after cruise. It was worth its price just for recalling Fred Friendly's aphorism about reporting for the TV camera – 'like writing with a one-ton pencil'. □

EDUCATION
Simon Frith

Live and learn

Is There Anyone Here From Education?
ed. ANNMARIE WOLPE and JAMES DONALD
Pluto £2.95

I hope this collection of essays on 'Education after Thatcher' is widely read because it focuses with great urgency the dilemmas that currently face socialists in education. The papers vary widely in quality and approach but their underlying argument goes something like this.

We have to understand Tory policy by reference to its organising ideology, Thatcherism, and hence the Tory package of financial cuts, privatisation, vocationalism, the Youth Training and Assisted Places Schemes, the abolition of the Schools Council, the concern for discipline and standards, and so on. But this policy hasn't simply involved the imposition of a new right ideology on old educational institutions; it is also a response to problems 'which are the object of real popular concern and grievance'. These problems are the result of the failure and bad faith of the Social Democratic ideology of education which organised educational policy before Thatcher. A socialist response to the Tories, then, can't rest content with an exposure of their ideological aims and material effects (though both tasks are performed well here), nor with nostalgia for more progressive times. Socialists too have to heed 'real popular grievances'.

I'm not altogether convinced by this. There's a left tendency, obvious here, to fetishise 'Thatcherism', to assume that Tory policy has a magical consistency and effectiveness. Thus these essays are strong on textual analysis (Joseph's speeches, Boyson's book), weak on what happens to these ideas in administrative practice. 'It is worth underlining', the editors write at one point, 'the remarkable successes that are achieved as a matter of routine within our schools', but, by then, it's unclear what they mean by success or how such success is achieved. The brief report on Hackney's anti-sexist initiative is appended to the book like a footnote, without being set in its ILEA context. Indeed, there is nothing here at all about local authority responses to Thatcherism even though LEAs remain the prime site of educational politics.

The weakness of the book, in short, is that it lacks discussion of the day-to-day experience of education after Thatcher. Virtually all its contributors are teachers, but few of them relate their arguments to their own practice (the striking exception is Anne Showstack Sassoon's thoughtful reflection on being a 'parent'). This matters because any attempt to develop and gain support for

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a socialist education policy will depend on people having some sense of what such a policy will mean to them and their children personally, emotionally, practically. And so, for example, James Donald's and Jim Grealy's stimulating paper on 'standards, literacy and culture' would have much more bite if it addressed not Roger Scruton (someone whose conversion matters little to socialism) but the parents, teachers and pupils of Croxteth School, Liverpool, who are (according to the chapter here on their struggle to save their school) equally committed to 'the traditional syllabus'.

The immediate task, though, is to challenge the institutional assumptions that the Thatcherist and Social Democratic approaches to education share. The most interesting essays here – Andy Green on training, Caroline Bean on private education and, especially, Richard Johnson on politics – suggest that a new policy on state schooling must begin by rethinking schools' place in a much wider context of learning and teaching. Even as the Tories attempt to limit the educational imagination, people continue to teach themselves, whether in the supportive networks of, say, women's groups, or the local research and resource centres that have developed in the last decade, or via the elaborate commercial provision of skills and knowledge (all those computer magazines, for example). Socialist educational thought must pay as much attention to what's happening outside schools as to what's happening in them – in order to break down the distinction. □

Among this week's contributors:

JIM MCGUIGAN lectures in cultural studies at Trinity and All Saints' College, Leeds; he is the author of *Writers and the Arts Council*.

FAITH EVANS's edition (with Olga Meier) of *The Daughters of Karl Marx: Family Correspondence 1866-1898* will be published in paperback by Penguin in February.

HISTORY
Faith Evans

In consort

Britannia's Daughters: Women of the British Empire
JOANNA TROLLOPE *Hutchinson* £10.95

Queen Victoria, quoted here in 1870, reminds us how little Britain's women leaders have done to promote their sisters' cause:

> . . . this *mad, wicked folly* of 'women's rights', with *all* the attendant horrors on which her poor feeble sex seems bent . . . is a subject which makes the queen so furious that she cannot contain herself. God created man and woman different and let each remain in their position . . .

Most of Victoria's female subjects had little choice but to follow their paternalistic monarch's advice and remain prone. With some striking exceptions, those who travelled to her colonies invariably made the journey in a subservient or caring capacity: as governess, nurse, helpmeet or wife, Kipling's memsahib held sway not just in India but in all the outposts of empire, compensating for alien climates, loneliness and enforced separation from her children by recreating a sterling slice of little England wherever she found herself. Duty, loyalty and moral purpose were the sentiments that governed her existence. In Forster's liberal revision of the type, these imperial values are challenged, but by female wisdom. As Mrs Moore testifies, maternal strengths still formed the whalebone of empire, even when it approached self-questioning decline.

Accounting for the memsahib is typical of the problems that confront the feminist historian who sets out to rescue women from male history. It's hard to resist the tendency to mythologise, by applying generalised contemporary assumptions to an earlier period. Trying to save a 19th-century botanist, for example, whose regular income permits her to send back delicate drawings of African specimens to the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, in the same leaky vessel as a prostitute forcibly deported to Tasmania, simply on the grounds that they were contemporaries, threatens to become as indiscriminate an enterprise as, say, a comparison between George Eliot and Cora Pearl.

Joanna Trollope is jauntily undeterred by the imminent contradictions of her subject. *Britannia's Daughters* offers excellent illustrations but no footnotes or conclusion, ending, somewhat incongruously, with an account of the career of Nellie Melba. Her book is organised as a series of vignettes. She is suitably indignant about the evils of lock hospitals and the Contagious Diseases Acts, and about the humiliating treatment of soldiers' wives, selected by lottery to accompany their men to the battlefield.

These 'ordinary women' left little testimony, but there are useful potted biographies of those pioneers (usually considered to be cranks) who were sufficiently literate and privileged to be able to contemplate posterity: the Countess of Dufferin, founder of the awesomely named National Association for Supplying Female Medical Aid to the Women of India, which alleviated the purdah problem by instituting women-only hospitals and training colleges; Maria Rye, who released many governesses from the Jane Eyre syndrome by packing them off to more appreciative employers in New Zealand, Australia and Natal; the lady travellers whose works are now coming back into print – Mary Kingsley, Isabella Bird and Marianne North. Most interesting of all is Flora Shaw, an Irish-French journalist whose commitment to imperialism was mercifully untainted by religious zeal. So astute were her reports on the economic and political situation in the colonies that in the early 1890s she was appointed colonial editor of *The Times*, working closely with Cecil Rhodes and successfully fielding the notorious *fracas* over the paper's involvement in the Jameson Raid. But in tune with her times, even Flora Shaw became a memsahib in the end, marrying Lord Lugard at 51 and standing by his side as he governed Hong Kong. An ironical fate for a New Woman who, on a visit to Capetown in 1892, had been accorded the double-edged accolade: 'She was so much more interested in the thing she was discussing than in herself, that men discussing politics with her forgot she was a woman and talked to her freely as to another man.' □

Charles Boyle

Still life

It looks like a double exposure, taken at different times.
Half of the room is grand hotel, the other half bedsit
and he, in the bedsit half, might never have seen her,
the way he sits with one leg over the arm of his chair
reading the sports pages. She, more formal,
has laid her book in her lap and seems to be waiting
rather for the palm court orchestra to strike up
than for him to speak: it's no *conversation*
interrupted here, in this curiously weightless pause
between the end of one and the beginning of another era.

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Notebooks 1960-77

ATHOL FUGARD ed. MARY BENSON
Faber £3.95

In his notebook for April 1962 Athol Fugard writes: 'The intellectual concepts, "ideas", which motivate the white man in South Africa today are of the sort which, when taken to the extreme, or in certain situations, reduce men to barbarism.' Some months earlier, the idea of apartheid, consolidated into the laws of the new South African Republic, had made barbarism an everyday reality. Through the 20 years which have since passed, Nelson Mandela has been in prison; thousands of others have been tortured or killed; millions have led deformed and degraded lives.

As a writer – a white man, an Afrikaner who believes the regime to be systematically evil – Fugard has worked on, all the time keeping notebooks. The selections in this book end in 1977, but over half the space is devoted to entries between 1960 and 1965, years which set the tone for what was to follow.

These are a writer's notebooks, not a political diary: a 17-year allusion to the coarse interior of barbarism, rather than a face-to-face record of it. For some, this will stand in itself as a kind of indictment: anything short of total political engagement in the struggle to end apartheid being tantamount to collaboration. Fugard tries to answer the charge for himself. Should he play to segregated audiences? Should he support the playwrights' boycott? In the end, he continues to work, believing that his theatre may give meaning to experience, but can change nothing.

Perhaps in spite of these doubts, Fugard's work is political; his indebtedness to Brecht comes through very clearly. It is for the light which they cast on Fugard's practice as a dramatist that these notebooks are most interesting. *The Island*, for instance, grows from true stories told by an actor friend after release from a sentence on Robben Island.

That's the problem with South Africa: it demands so much of us. Its reality breaks through all of the time, undermining our morality as surely as wilful ignorance of death-camps ever did. Fugard writes that he feels 'at times mortally sick from the corruption and duplicity of my country'. Yet a play like *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* can still find humour and humanity in this corruption and mock the barbarians offstage. One question remains for Fugard, for all of us, to answer – Is *Sizwe Bansi* enough?

Tony Beeton

A Science Policy for Britain

TAM DALYELL *Longman* £5.95

Tam Dalyell is one of the few MPs to have shown a sustained interest in science and technology. He has, for the past 15 years, written a weekly column for the *New Scientist* and, in December 1980, was made the Labour Party's spokesman on science. This was followed, within weeks, by the establishment of a Science and Technology Working Party. Both Dalyell and the Working Party were the victims of events. Dalyell was unseated in favour of Geoffrey Robinson, while the Working Group was brutally terminated by the announcement of June's General Election.

A Science Policy for Britain reads like the manifesto for science that Labour failed to produce. It deals admirably with the many absurdities perpetrated in the name of this government – for example, University cuts, meant to be weighted heavily in favour of science and technology, that actually crippled such successful technological Universities as Aston, Salford and Bradford. It also highlights the gross distortion of the science budget in Britain, with 54 per cent of the budget directed to defence research. Most importantly, it rejects the technocratic over-optimism of the Wilson era that made Labour science policy so out of step with public perceptions.

There are failings. Dalyell perpetuates the self-satisfying myth that Japan's success is largely the product of borrowed 'ideas' from the West, rather than any failure of commission in Britain and elsewhere. And it is a manifesto for science, rather than a science policy.

Dalyell and Jeremy Bray – Kinnock's new science spokesman – and Labour's new science policy committee have the task of devising a programme of work that produces such a policy in time for the next General Election. It will be wider ranging than this useful first step and, as such, will have to concern itself more with the problems of a *socialist* science policy and how to inject some democratic elements into its formulation.

Glyn Ford

Challenging the Figures

CHRISTOPHER HIRD *Pluto Press* £5.95

This is a handbook for workers and trade unionists, an iconoclastic guide to company accounts. Taking as his starting point the statement made by Susan Dev, professor of accounting at LSE, that 'profit figures are not facts, they are just opinions', Hird goes even further in a systematic and forceful attack on the pretended objectivity of accounting practice.

I will give just one example: accounting for the effects of inflation. This question was first taken seriously by British industry in 1972-73, when the rate of inflation rose very sharply, causing a sharp rise in profits at the same time as companies found themselves short of cash. They desperately needed the accountants to come up with some way of convincing trade unions that they weren't making excessive profits. Under the traditional method of accounting, a market stall-holder who buys cabbages for 10p and sells them for 15p and then buys more for 12p makes a profit of 5p per cabbage. But if the 'replacement cost' system is used, the profit per cabbage is only 3p. The accountancy profession had several ideas about the complex details of such a system of inflation accounting, but these were no use to industry because the Inland Revenue refused to have anything to do with them. So British industry went to the Labour government in 1974 and asked for tax relief on the increase in the cost of raw materials during the financial year. Stock relief, says Hird, 'to all intents and purposes abolished corporation tax for British manufacturing companies'. In theory corporation tax not paid as a result of stock relief was only 'deferred', but this pretence was finally dropped by the Conservatives when the new stock relief rules were brought in in 1981. 'In effect', says Hird, 'these changes have amounted to a handout to British companies of several billion pounds.' Little wonder, then, that industry has lost interest in inflation accounting. What was originally the whole point of the exercise, a genuine search for a more objective measurement of company profits, was abandoned in September this year when the accountancy profession admitted that its inflation accounting rules, currently on a three-year trial, are to be scrapped. Once Hird has shown up accountants in this light, it becomes easy and in fact exhilarating for the reasonably intelligent layperson to 'challenge the figures'.

John Rentoul

Fortress Scotland: A Guide to the Military Presence

MALCOLM SPAVEN *Pluto Press in association with Scottish CND* £3.95

In March 1979 a fishing boat based in Campbeltown on the Mull of Kintyre caught an unexpectedly large fish. A US navy Poseidon ballistic missile submarine from the Holy Loch base ran into its nets in the Sound of Jura, and dragged the hapless boat backwards at high speed for 10 minutes before the fishing crew could cut free the trawl gear. This is just one of the more hair-raising incidents described in the chapter on the impact of the military presence in Scotland in Malcom Spaven's important new book. He outlines the effect on local economies, the conflicting pressures on land use and the transparent charade represented by the 'public inquiries' sometimes held into military developments.

Activists, and those with just a passing interest in Scottish military matters, should be grateful to Mr Spaven. He has done us all a service in comprehensively researching and clearly recounting a virtually complete picture of Scotland's 219 known military bases. From insignificant army firing ranges to the infamous bases at the Holy Loch, Coulport, Faslane, Rosyth, Lossiemouth, Machrihanish, Stornaway and Leuchars, he provides a wealth of detailed, well-referenced factual information. Campaigners against the military north of the border cannot really afford to be without this book.

Rob Edwards

Life of Python

GEORGE PERRY *Michael Joseph* £7.95

Here is a brisk but interesting biog of the wayward Pythoneers, still collapsing lungs with laughter after all this time. At the outset, Perry threatens to get all academic: 'Together there is a synergism at work which produces a comic genius.' Tack a handy 'Discuss' to that and you'd have something for Oxbridgers to chew on, eh? But the danger is averted, and Perry, a self-confessed devotee, nevertheless produces something a good snip above your normal fanthology.

The brightest tactic is to separate the book into three sections. In the first, we are spun lightly through the tangled comic roots of Pythonism. Here, as is the case throughout *Life of Python*, the pages are packed with pics.

The second section takes us separately through each of the team's careers, and it's here that Perry scores. Books like this live on bits of unlikely info: for instance, that Palin was anchorman of a brief pop programme, *Now*, with the long gone independent TV channel, TWW. Jones was once teamed with Miles Kington (main achievement: one joke accepted for Ken Dodd's act). Gilliam and Cleese were collaborating briefly as long ago as 1964. Chapman is a qualified doctor. And it's odd to imagine Idle, Clive James and Germaine Greer prancing the boards together.

The television and film credits which follow the third section – which charts the Python productions themselves – are an interesting insight into the micro-circuit of British comedy. They make the rock business look simple. At any rate, this is a light, simple skimmer of a book, pleasantly evoking memories of a show once tentatively to be titled *Bunn, Wackett, Buzzard, Stubble and Boot*.

Bill Greenwell

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ART

John Spurling

High and low

John Piper
Tate until 22 January and Marlborough until 14 January
Reg Butler
Tate until 15 January

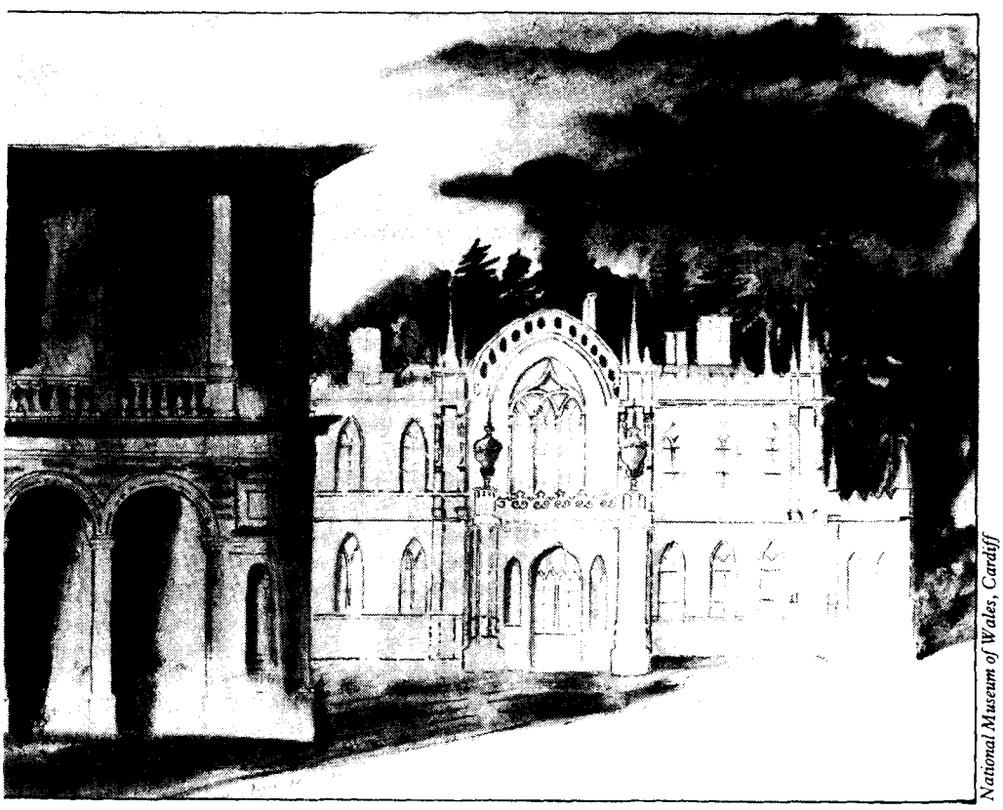
The shock of seeing a real live painting on stage at Covent Garden is a measure of how deep the split has been, over a long period, between 'high' and 'decorative' art. John Hubbard has not made the decor for Richard Alston's *Midsummer* (reviewed by Stephanie Jordan last week), he has supplied an enormous and characteristically ebullient abstract landscape – hot browns surrounding a fissure of blues and greens – which determines the ballet's visual context quite as powerfully as Tippett's music determines its aural one. The event is a credit to the Royal Ballet as well as to Hubbard. Bringing 'high' and 'decorative' art together again is not just a question of luring the artists down from their sequestered heights but of being prepared for something rather less unobtrusive than 'decor' or 'design'.

The whole business is fraught with snobbery and misunderstanding. Now, 30 years after his death, we can see, courtesy of the exhibition at the Hayward, what an original artist Dufy was, in spite of his light touch and his association with textile design. Dufy's most notable follower in this country is John Piper. He too has been put aside as a mere decorator and illustrator, though, like Dufy, he started out in the best *avant-garde* company. On the other hand those who fear modern art and still seem to regard it almost as an international conspiracy are eager to adopt Piper as a kind of talisman of the good old insular England. Certainly his long association with Betjeman and the Shell Guides and his obsession with country churches and gracious ruins make him an obvious candidate for the role; and there are moments reading *Piper's Places* by Richard Ingrams and Piper himself (Chatto/Hogarth, £12.50) when one feels sickened by the close atmosphere of complacency, nostalgia and exclusiveness which surrounds this particular compound of upper-middle-class, Church of England, Highways and Byways Englishness. But a visit to Piper's 80th birthday retrospective at the Tate will clear the head.

It begins firmly with his Thirties' allegiances to the *avant-garde* – collages, abstracts and constructions – and is rigorously selective with his enormous post-war output of romantic places. There is a room devoted to stage-designs, not only the later and better-known ones for Britten's operas, but also for Spender's *Trial of a Judge* and ballets by Ashton and Cranko; and another room brilliant with stained-glass and the full-size cartoon for Chichester Cathedral's magnificent altar tapestry; there are photographs, book illustrations and textile designs. It is an output as varied and prolific as Dufy's and as dependent for its lively immediacy on the dialogue between swift draughtsmanship and strong colour. True, the flavour is English Gothic rather than French Impressionist and the emphasis on old, untenanted buildings in lurid weather-conditions instead of busily peopled scenes under bright blue skies suggests a certain crabbiness and rural introversion quite foreign to Dufy's urban and urbane temperament; but Piper's originality consists in his marriage of foreign technical modernity to English Romantic subject-matter and if one considers that his other masters Cotman and Turner partly anticipated Cézanne and Monet, one can see that Piper is less a provincial eccentric than another link in a long cyclical chain. His latest archive of romantic places and the latest evidence of his unflagging energy and facility are at the Marlborough.

The Tate's other current exhibition – a small posthumous retrospective of Reg Butler, who died two years ago – is a sad contrast. Butler, trained first as an architect and then as a blacksmith, was strongly influenced by Moore in his earliest sculptures. By the end of the Forties Butler had found a more distinctive style of his own – skeletal, insect-like figures made of forged and welded iron. Then, in 1953, he was suddenly plucked from relative obscurity to be the grand prizewinner in a notorious international competition. 'The Unknown Political Prisoner' was the most objective work he ever made, calling on his background as an architect and a blacksmith, but having little to do with the personal figurative themes he had been pursuing up to then. The vituperation it aroused, its failure ever to become a full-scale monument (at one time it was going to be put up in Berlin) and the collapse of a further project for a public work seem to have driven him back on himself, with increasingly unfortunate results. His perennial interest in the female figure became finally a desperate attempt to combine naturalism with sculptural form, the surface appearance of skin and flesh with the underlying material of bronze, the ecstatic movements of athletic sex with the appraising eye of the cold observer. Nothing coheres, nothing comes out as he must have wanted it to: flesh congeals into the shiny pallor of a doll, movement into *rigor mortis*, openness and invitation into pornography and repulsion. From his 1980 Towshend lecture, quoted in full in the catalogue, Butler sounds to have been a sane, modest and sympathetic man, yet placed next door to the kaleidoscopic fertility of Piper's *oeuvre*, Butler's Frankensteins seem all the more monstrous, as if in his retreat from the public arena he had also lost control of his own private world. □

Piper's 'Italian and Gothic, Hafod' (1939)



National Museum of Wales, Cardiff

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THEATRE
Christopher Edwards

The devil in Peter

Peter Pan
J. M. BARRIE
Barbican
Gulliver's Travels
from the novel by JONATHAN SWIFT
The Gate, Latchmere

This year the RSC's **Peter Pan** is again the most spectacular and enjoyable Christmas production in London, and I would repeat what I said last Christmas (again as a recommendation) that anyone expecting a staple fare 'panto' will be in for a surprise.

Psychological and dramatic depth have been added to the usual version of Barrie's masterpiece simply by returning to the author's original writings, including the 1904 stage text, the 1920 film scenario (written with Charlie Chaplin in mind), not to mention the 1911 novel and other unpublished material. As well as respect for Barrie's serious intentions, the wonder and enchantment of the story are still there, although this year I felt the pathology of Peter and his refusal to grow up were more intrusive as thematic preoccupations than before.

Wonder and enchantment need to be realised and John Napier's set does the job brilliantly. The audience soars out of the small Bloomsbury bedroom with Peter, Wendy and the other Darling children, up to the heights of the huge Barbican stage. The flying really is glorious and, while a skyscape descends to plot the passage to Neverland, a magical revolving island appears below, ingeniously providing the underground den of the Lost Boys, the hilly terrain of the Redskins and, round at the back, the splendid deck of Captain Hook's pirate ship – both this deck and the duel it witnesses between Peter and Hook more than satisfied the demanding standards of the children I went with. There is also an enchanting lagoon scene where shimmering blue silk spreads over the stage and mischievous mermaids try to entice the Boys under the billowing waves.

In fact 'mischievous' is too tame a word to describe them; they are sinister too and as the water rises higher to threaten the injured Peter, they try to drag Wendy under the water to drown. There are a number of similarly frightening moments where, I think, the RSC does justice to Barrie's original conception of the story – one of his complaints about the statue of Peter in Kensington Gardens was that it failed to show the *devil* in him. There is of course the devil-may-care side too: the little adventurer who flies about shoving his foot through kites. But the first appearance of his face at the window is eery (we share, momentarily, Mrs Darling's anxiety) and Peter's threat to stab Wendy's daughter at the end when he finds Wendy grown up and *a mother* sends a frisson down the spine. As Barrie himself said, 'The actors in a fairy play should feel that it is written by a child in *deadly earnestness*'. The company certainly does justice to the author's feelings here.

As well as menace there is longing and pain in the work too, all part of Peter's fear of manhood. Whereas Katy Behean's bossy, vital Wendy evinces an unquenchable maternal spirit which anticipates her eventual maturity, Peter is terrified of manhood, refusing to understand Wendy's hesitant enquiries about their future, and telling Tiger Lily to shut up when she offers to be his squaw.

Neverland is a *motherless* world as well as an adventurous island; the Little Boys and the Pirates all want mothers, and there are numerous pregnant remarks to underpin the impression that Barrie was well aware of the psychological suggestiveness of his story. When the fiercely jealous Tinkerbell dupes one of the Boys into shooting down the 'Wendy Bird' he says over her 'corpse': 'When ladies came to me in my dreams I called them pretty mother, when one really arrived I shot her.'

Edward Petherbridge narrates, clambering over the revolving island between scene changes to tell us what comes next. Stephen Moore doubles as the feckless Mr Darling and the cringing but nasty Captain Hook who thoroughly deserves his fate in the jaws of the crocodile. Mark Rylance is a brilliant Peter – superbly acrobatic, full of tricks and will, but both vulnerable and unreachable at the same time.

The Gate Theatre offers yet another ambitious production, an adaptation of **Gulliver's Travels.** Lou Stein (the director and adapter) uses the device of an older cynical Gulliver relating the tale of his travels for the 'amendment not approbation' of his listeners, and a young narrator (Lemuel) who actually undergoes the adventures. We meet Gulliver as he mucks out a stable, evidently just back from his last visit to the kingdom of the Houyhnhnms. Eventually we are taken to see these wise and benevolent equine rulers, first passing through Lilliput, Brobdingnag and Laputa.

The staging throughout is inventive; when Gulliver is shipwrecked in Lilliput he 'swims' across a web of raised ropes. In Lilliput itself we see one long string stretching down from a top corner – up at which the inhabitants stare and shout to address the colossus. An enormous ear emerges from a side entrance to hear the intrigues of the Empress, but even when Gulliver comes on stage the sense of scale is easily kept up by having an eiderdown of fields at his feet for him to tower over.

Although the adaptation is coherent, the absence of dramatic *conflict* means that the satires on war, public affairs and so on are best enjoyed by those familiar with Swift's work – which may be to say the vast majority of theatre-goers. □

FILMS
John Coleman

Snow job

Gorky Park (15)
Leicester Square Theatre

For the benefit of anyone who has managed to avoid reading Martin Cruz Smith's 1981 mostly Moscow-based thriller, it starts with the chance unearthing of three refrigerated corpses – faces skinned and finger-tips sliced off – from the icy snow of a popular family park. Convinced the KGB are behind the murders, top Militia investigator Arkady Renko at first tries to shift the responsibility for solving what looks like the insoluble on to that bleak organisation; nothing doing, and fairly swiftly our Arkady – who has a nice line in shopsoiled irony to go with his keen wits and old-style decency – finds himself up to his vulnerable neck in bureaucratic politics, visiting Americans (one good, one bad), and passionate love for a wilful, enigmatic beauty from Siberia.

The whole, richly encrusted structure revolves around the smuggling-out of some of the USSR's most precious trading assets – alive. And one of the very considerable pleasures of an ingenious tale was the sense it yielded of an in-depth portrait of Muscovite society at several levels: to the credulous outsider (me) it seemed to lift a lid off insider's holes and corners of the city, quite bubbling with seamy life. If it had a weakness – and I incline to concur that it did – that came in the heavy improbabilities of a longish finale in which Arkady and his beloved Irina are transplanted to America for the showdown.

My only New Year resolution, which was simply to write about the film before me and ignore the titbits of its tormented gestation so liberally available in press releases and the greedy media generally, now goes for an immediate Burton. Because, for those who *have* read the original, the filmed *Gorky Park* is likely to prove – at the least – disconcerting.

Obviously something had to give and Dennis Potter has explained why he was keen to write the screenplay: 'The fat book had waddled its way into the best-seller lists with something much sleeker and faster locked inside it', nothing more or less than 'Philip Marlowe in Moscow'. Well, yes, up to a point, and Potter's boiled-down script skilfully omits the Stateside excursion while preserving a crucial confrontation. And of course there was never a producer's chance, in that hell assigned to the breed, of shooting the thing on the actual locations: the director, our Michael Apted, and his accomplished fellow-craftsmen had to make do with Finland and Stockholm for those, and even the Finns became a bit leery of

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what they were up to. The damned snow wouldn't fall, either. But, pros to a man and woman, they plugged away, shoving up a massive poster-picture of Lenin, recreating the fateful Park, sticking Cyrillic No Smoking notices all over the place. (Funny that these should look so fresh and amateurish: they must do in Moscow, too.)

William Hurt, as a box-office Arkady, puffed away at genuine Russian cigarettes – which he loathed – in the cause of authenticity, while retaining his American accent in the cause of getting Americans into the cinemas. And hereby hangs the largest banana skin the movie rather haplessly lets drop for our credulity to skid around on. Lee Marvin, as the exquisitely groomed arch-criminal Yank, is said to have intensified *his* domestic accent to distinguish him from Russian Hurt, but that's surely horsefeathers. A very good cast of British and American actors includes Ian Bannen as a smiley Chief Prosecutor, gruff-honest Michael Elphick as the only sidekick Arkady can trust, Alexei Sayle as a farcically slimy black marketeer, and Brian Dennehy as a camouflaged New York cop who speaks perfect Russian (a key fact about him, if one stops to reflect an instant): and every one of them uses some approximation of his familiar voice.

The only broken accent to be heard is that of the girl Irina, played delectably enough by Polish Joanna Pacula. If Apted is to be applauded for steering clear of the old fractured fatuities, the confusion of – as it were – brogues and poshnesses which replaces them is hardly a bonus.

It struck me early on that all the heralded devotion accorded to making things look right and Muscovite was going for very little, that the technically well-made movie – with its adroit dips into Tchaikovsky on the track – was happening in some no-man's-land of intrigue and detection, and that I really didn't give a damn about much of any of it. It was as if this were the new all-purpose cinema adventure story, manufactured to travel well absolutely anywhere.

In which event, then, the loss or skimming curtailment of important areas of emotional and visual richness (Arkady's wretched marriage, his use of underworld contacts, a prolonged visit to the master-artist of Tussaud heads from a scrap of skull) was evidently what the director and his writer intended; and no point lamenting the odd, rarefied atmosphere, a peculiar thinness of living texture.

What's more, the central performance of Hurt also became explicable. Uncharitably, one might have assumed that the blandness of it was Hurt floundering, Hurt unmotivated, and those momentary twitches of a sort of stifled angst merely reactions to a surfeit of black tobacco.

Filming *Gorky Park* was never about to be a doddle. This unrooted affair was a way out, if scarcely the one anticipated. And, should it indeed emerge as the precursor of universally digestible cinemantics, a book about its making might well hit the best-seller lists in turn. □

TELEVISION
Hugo Williams

32/6 a pair

CHRISTMAS is when you come face to face with your portrait in the attic. 'Money is beauty,' it tells you; 'money is virtue, money would have kept you young and loved if you'd been a good boy and listened to the ads on telly . . .' But the telly isn't looking any healthier than your portrait is at this late stage in its career. Christmas is when you come face to face with it on a more or less permanent basis, like waking up and finding yourself married to a one-night-stand; avalanches of gooey films from the Sixties, interrupted by attacks from loved ones bearing gifts and the Queen doing her annual take-off of Stanley Baxter. (Burp.)

The only thing worth watching over the holiday was Heathcote Williams's **What the Dickens**! (C4), but you watched everything else as well, naturally, if you got the chance. 'I have recently purchased the entire stock in trade of a street conjuror', wrote Dickens in 1842, aged 30, 'and last night found myself more popular than I have ever been in my life.' The play was a wonderful, verbose satire on the Spirit of Christmas Past, a conjuring show put on by Dickens for his family and friends and the children of a local workhouse. Scenes of preparation inside the Devonshire Terrace home of the newly-famous 'Boz' were contrasted with the harsh treatment and pale faces of the foundlings as they trail through foggy streets warbling a carol. 'If they all come in at once they'll let the fog in with them,' says Dickens's assistant. 'The fog . . .' muses our magician, Precisely what I require. Topping.'

Also present are various contemporaries: the lemon-lipped Thomas Carlyle ('Transcendental moonshine!'), the actor Thomas Macready ('All literary men are conjurors and mountebanks') and the ever-amorous William Thackeray, enquiring of every passing lady whether 'this plant (the mistletoe) affords us the usual osculatory privileges common to its species . . .' No story much, but the writing throughout a gorgeous candelabra of high Victorian vernacular, all Latin circumlocutions and niceties, as baroquely glittering as the author's earlier celebration of the drug culture, *AC/DC*. The connection is the idea of transformation: Dickens's 'wonders' become parables on the meaning of Christmas today, 'an amateur miracle' turned professional trickery in our time: 'If the duties of Christmas be forgotten, its plum pudding will turn to bile, its packages to the merest trash.'

Conjuring on television is a kind of contradiction in terms, as witness Paul Daniels's glutinous advertisement for himself, delivered to sleep-starved honeymooners, their mouths hanging open in advance like those of baby birds. Williams's effects were more theatrical than deceitful and the occasion was rich enough in incidental pleasures to spill out into your living room, where it will hardly have recognised Mr Kipling's over-sugared mince pies on your rubbish-dump of a dining-table.

Hearing that honest, cliché-ridden prose spoken by someone with a strong home-counties lisp in **George Orwell** (BBC-2) didn't help one appreciate 'one of the greatest writers England has ever produced' (*Radio Times*). Most of his autobiographical thoughts seemed commonplace beside those of his witnesses: 'The past is a curious thing. It is with you all the time . . . It always seems to be summer when you look back . . .' The gist of these four films seemed to be that Orwell was another of those writers who produced what he did largely to impress or defeat an unmoved father whom he never even saw until he was eight: a contrary view which made them highly watchable.

Orwell was a misfit, an ugly duckling who bloomed late, on his own terms. 'He never looked like an Eton boy', remembered an old girl in Southwold where his ex-colonial family wound up, 'He looked more like a tramp, not good-looking.' Another ageing coquette 'never took him seriously at all . . . from a *romantic* point of view!'

Orwell's father on the other hand they found 'an attractive old boy, natty, tidy, with a buttonhole'. You can see it all, in that looks-snob age, the pukka colonial image courted by the boy Blair, off to Burma to be the tidy policeman his father would love: 'He always talked about going back to the East. He had early memories and that's why the disillusionment was so severe.' And then the change of heart, the change of name, the change of class that wasn't.

'He had plenty of hospitality off of us', said a man in Wigan tracked down for the occasion, 'but we never got any thanks from him.' Inverted good-manners on Orwell's part, or the grossest misjudgment? 'He was never short of money, even during his down-and-out days,' remembered his tailor. 'We made him a lot of flannel trousers . . . 32/6 a pair, almost a working man's wage. No, we never had any trouble with him financially in all the 40 years he came to us. We never thought of him as a writer. He loved writing, yes.' Well, with tailors like that . . . I must remember not to go to *him* for my flannels.

So who did like him? 'Whichever way you turn this curse of class difference confronts you like a wall of stone,' he wrote. But the wall was really around himself. 'Dull and uninteresting', recalled a Mr Grogan. 'One of those boys who are born old . . . pale, greasy hair which he put extra oil on'. Even Cyril Connolly, a pleasure of the series, could not keep a shiver of disgust out of his otherwise affectionate memories: 'A flaccid face and spatular fingers. He liked morbid moral questions like would you drink a pint of blood to save your father.' Connolly took out of his pocket a letter Orwell had written while they were at prep school together. 'I'd written a poem on the death of Lord Kitchener. I was very pleased he liked it.' □

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WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 2803 **Set by P. Kay**

Bookshops are offering nostalgia buffs the complete lyrics of Cole Porter and Noel Coward. We think they need updating to take full account of the horrors of Mrs T's Britain. Up to 16 gloomy lines, please, of 'You're the pits', 'Don't put your daughter in the house, Michael Heseltine', 'Bad times just around the corner', or whatever, by 20 January.

No 2800 **Set by Dido Bagshaw**

Radio commentaries on human beings engaged in the sport of mating.

Report **By Ms de Meaner**

Having cast a heart-felt commination at the retreating back of the pusillanimous Squiffy and personally removed PC49 from the reception area where he was staging a one-constable plod-in on behalf of the Festival of Light, I am now at liberty to concentrate on worrying about you, our mainly it-must-be-said male compers. The comp psychoanalyst will be studying the fascinatingly recurrent motif of not, as it were, lasting the course and we may publish our findings – if not too painful – in due course. Meantime, a Nightingale to each winner for stylish reflection of the cadences of radio.

Johnston: . . . As you join us the covers are off and foreplay has begun. A couple of bouncers have tempted a few tickles; but we're looking forward to a jolly good knock. Trevor?
Bailey: I'd be inclined, if I were playing, to remove both slips immediately.
Johnston: . . . . Now there's that lovely rhythmic approach . . . finding a gentle stroke in response.
Martin-Jenkins: Curious stance . . . head waving about. Rather suspect.
(Moans audible)
Johnston: . . . . Adjustment to protective kit gives me a chance to mention a nice listener's letter, asking the year of Bubbers the 'Blue Veined Bugler's' remarkable stand . . . . *(Passionate gasps)* . . . but the action's quickening here . . .
Bailey: I would guess he'll stay in all morning.
Johnston: He's coming in fast . . a shout goes up . . . HE'S OUT! Sheer speed ends a promising partnership, but it was quite a useful little prod . . . .

H. AXBEY

Brian Johnston: This week the 'Down Your Way' team is in Soho – one of London's oldest 'villages'. And here we are in fact in one of the oddly-named 'knocking-shops', talking to a 'punter', who incidentally seems terribly excited to be appearing on the radio. Now you seem to be having marvellous fun . . . *(muffled cries)* . . . No, no, of course I'm not Roger Cook. Now I should explain to listeners that you're absolutely flat out, having what I'm told is a special 'Bangkok massage' from a jolly attractive lady, who we'll be chatting to in a moment. Now what do you enjoy doing in your spare time, sir? *(indistinct grunts)* I see – well, this is an honour, your honour. Now do you have a favourite piece of music for us to play?

PETER NORMAN

'He approaches. Man. The human male. Ascending the stairs now, carefully, delicately, balancing two cups of cocoa. He's at the bedside. This moment could be crucial. If she doesn't respond to his gesture, we could all be disappointed. But it's all right, she's looking up from her Marilyn French. She's taken the cocoa. We can see the bared-teeth grimace that signifies approval. His dressing-gown's off and he's in bed. It's just a matter of waiting. Robin, can you see anything yet?'

'Well, I'm under the bedclothes, Jim, at the foot end, ready to report any activity, but so far it's very quiet . . .'

'I think something must be happening. She's turning the pages of her book much faster now – and she's taking off her glasses and turning towards him – but, oh dear, the baby's started crying . . .'

GEORGE SIMMERS

Listeners might like to know that in this complicated sport attack below the belt is encouraged . . . Oh – they're off. It's quite an orthodox foreplay position: the contestants are in a tight clinch, faces close together. They can barely see one another. We can expect a breast-stroke now, I think. Oh, I say! Well, that was most unexpected. Cunnilingus is usually a much later tactic. But surprise can work. Let's see if it comes off. They're both down now. Yes, it's the classic '69. They're well matched, that's certain. We may be seeing a couple of future medallists here. And now for the reverse thrust. Yes . . . yes . . . he's made it. The missionary posture. Say what you like, it's a long-standing favourite. If they can develop a rhythm now . . . Oh, dear me! Well, that's always the danger with such a frenzied beginning. He's not made it to the end of round one. Back to the studio.

BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

Listeners Mars-side are warned some may find what follows disturbing, and the programme is definitely not recommended for children. So back to E.T., as he has come to be known!

'Hello, listeners, are you hovering comfortably? Well, here on Earth it's a warm infra red night in Hyde Park and we're about to find out why they do it in the dark . . . Well, this *is* odd, no machinery, not even a screwdriver, just a – and yes! Now they're . . . and Oh my goodness! Listeners won't believe it, but it's true, it's true! Humans do it like we . . . we make cars. This *is* a turn up for the book! If I hadn't seen it with my own eyes I wouldn't have believed it. Explains those traffic jams of course, but rather hit and miss I'd say. Well, listeners, signing off now. Next week how humans fuel themselves, exhaust system and so on . . .'

T. GRIFFITHS

This isn't a very good male specimen, actually – rather on the flabby side. Don't think we're going to get much verbal courtship. The female says it's time he gave her money for some new curtains – we're looking through their present ones – and now, yes, he's saying something. He says Arsenal haven't been out of the First Division as long as he, or even his dad, can remember. She says great, but what about the bloody curtains? He says that's not a very romantic thing to say at a time like this. Ah, now they're clinging together in that untidy, desperate way that humans do. The female says that if it helps he can think about Lucy Clitterhouse at number 19 wearing her leather skirt. He says no, Arsenal excites him more. One can't help reflecting that ant-eaters manage it with more grace.

PETER VEALE

FIRST PERSON

Jeremy Lewis

Rose gardens

I think it's fair to say that, throughout my university career, I never gave a moment's thought to what I would do once I had been expelled from Eden. The university of my choice (the only one I could get into) was a byword for indolence and conviviality, highly esteemed as a first-rate rest home in which the tweedier type of English public schoolboy could snooze and carouse four years away: the terms were restricted to six weeks, lest dons and undergraduates succumbed to terminal exhaustion; the termly essay soon became an annual affair (written in the autumn and handed back in the early summer) and visits to one's tutor were confined to the presentation for signature of a printed form entitling the bearer to a valuable discount on the flight back to London.

Ignorant and disdainful of the tedious world outside, I assumed that this cordial state of affairs might well go on for ever; failing which, I consoled myself with dreams of the sudden bestowal of a large private income (left in her will by a benign but previously unheard-of maiden aunt) or the surprising reintroduction of the feudal system, with myself and my fellow-snoozers as the deserving recipients of largesse. When neither of these contingencies came to pass – and I found myself blinking uncomfortably in the sunlight, like a mole on the end of a spade – I slowly and unhappily set about finding a job.

Like thousands of equally vapid arts graduates, I thought I might try my hand at a little publishing or journalism; like the more foolish of my competitors, I approached the glum business of applying for jobs and going for interviews in a spirit of imperturbable arrogance and inflexibiliy. Unless I could start at the top – in London, of course – there seemed little point in taking things any further. How could an allegedly enlighted publisher (hitherto so charming) seriously suggest that I, a man who had edited both the university magazines from a supine position and an acknowledged expert on 'Was Early Irish society tribal? Discuss', should start work in the warehouse? I made my displeasure manifest and brought the interview swiftly to a close. As for the suggestion by the features editor of a national newspaper that I might like to consider a job in their Manchester office, so shocked was I by the notion that I decided to treat his proposal as some kind of hideous aberration

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on his part, not to be referred to again in conversation between us.

All this was, of course, taking place in the ebullient 1960s, when jobs abounded and graduate unemployment seemed a contradiction in terms; even so, it took me longer than most to float slowly down to earth and to realise that my university training in swallowing sizeable quantities of Guinness's stout and Jamesons Whiskey would be of more immediate application in a publisher's publicity department than an intimate knowledge of the King's Wardrobe in the reign of Henry III, or strong views on the true identity of St Patrick.

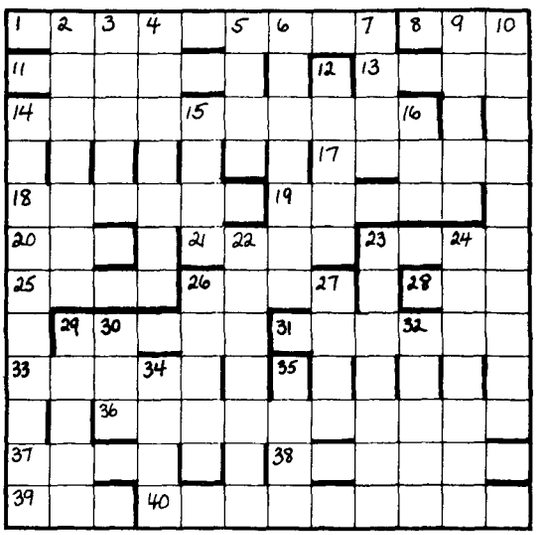
As it was, my stern refusal to contemplate Mancunian life led me into publishing rather than journalism. It's a decision I've sometimes regretted, since I enjoy the company of hacks even more than I do that of publishers, but I suspect I would have cut a poor and ineffectual figure as a newshound. Journalists appeared to live on the telephone, an instrument I regarded with the revulsion normally reserved for the discovery of a tarantula lurking on one's desk; I knew I would fail utterly when it came to talking to people who didn't want to talk to me; the very notion of life in an open-plan office, with derisive colleagues listening to my futile, apologetic maunderings on the telephone, turned my blood to ice.

Most fatally, perhaps, I lacked the journalist's missionary, somewhat puritanical zeal to expose the inner workings of government and society, the belief that the assiduous excavation and accumulation of information will reveal a salutary and corrective Truth. All too often, it seemed to me, the Truth was prosaic and self-evident, a dull elaboration of what one had always known or imagined to be the case. To my shame, perhaps, I relished the inexplicit and the hidden, finding the lists of names printed in the Court Circular pages of *The Times* infinitely more tantalising and entertaining than a blow-by-blow account of the proceedings, and incoherent mutterings at the far end of a church vastly preferable to jocular goings-on around a mobile altar. Ever an enthusiast for secret gardens, too large a part of me no doubt remained – and remains – ensnared in Eden, unwilling or unable to grapple with Life as it really is. □

Salamanca 77

'I Remember, I Remember'

PRIZES: £25 cheques for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Salamanca 77, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 31 January.



Four unclued answers are closely associated with 14 down, and their unchecked letters give YOUR FOUR AGES. A close study of the finished grid will reveal an inner motif, also connected, and solvers requiring verification of all these might consult Brewer.

Name_____

Address_____

_____

_____

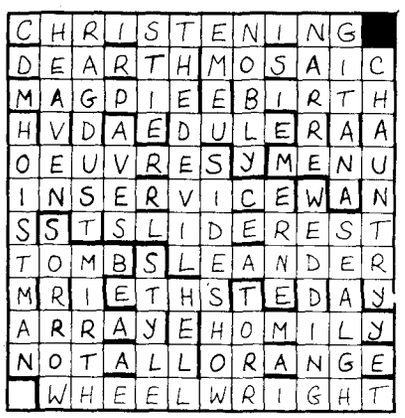
ACROSS

8 Old supplement to Germanic History (Part III of V) (3)
11 Cover for fear (6)
13 Inside border, train for edge of shield? (4)
14 Like pirate raids, below zero, in addition (10)
17 The art of imitating? (Pam is feeble) (5)
18 Be totally characteristic of extremes of theology? Religious rubbish! (6)
19 Oil palm? Exist consuming timber? (5)
20 Dance that's expressive of joy (3)
21 Jock's old mare moved unsteadily, we hear (4)
23 Old saying in O.E.D., say (4)
25 May perhaps surround King? (4)
26 Teases young people (4)
28 Siamese/Japanese fish (3)
29 He settles for price that's certainly held (5)
31 Trespassing maids are, say, arrested – the cry from Greenham? (6)
33 Language, or one to talk this mostly (5)
37 An estate, one most reach (4)
38 Nasty squirmy –– that makes miry squelches, perhaps? (6)
39 At edge of stream, say? (3)

DOWN

2 Fashionable early works he ornaments with metal etc. (7)
3 Engrave square trophy with length in it (5)
4 Lady in hospitable being treated in a convenient way (7)
5 Bird that's loud – type of knot (4)
6 Yellow flower not yet open? You'll find any top bloom planted in damp ground (7)
7 Contradictorily, it was a steep crag (4)
9 Tightly crowded (5)
12 Get on with conversation one time (5)
15 No longer dislike following governor gathers (4)
16 –– way birds may be produced? (3)
22 It could be part of the skyline? (7)
23 Brief one in hanging (7)
24 Accrued rare old French money (7)
26 Difficult English task – read a poet (5)
27 Square – difficult bottom to plough (4)
29 Soft part for poor labourer (5)
30 Nurse found in regular places in Capital (3)
32 Measure energy in volume of noise after sun-up? (5)
34 No longer proceed, having viewed from top to toe? (4)
35 Cone shell soft and crumbly inside (4)

Solution to Salamanca 75

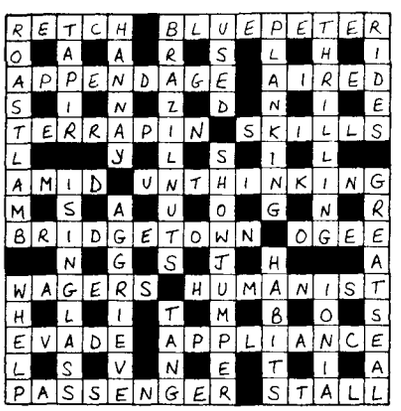


The number rhyme relating to magpies may be found in Brewer.

Prizewinners to Salamanca 75

F. Foxcroft, Rochdale
Dr T. O. Hughes, Basingstoke
Arwyn Thomas, Porthcawl

Solution to 1424



Prizewinners to 1424

B. B. Daubney, Melton Mowbray
C. J. Kitchen, Ayr
J. Mernagh, Wrotham

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RESEARCH ADMINISTRATOR

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The successful applicant should have experience in Health Service research and will work from the National Birthday Trust Headquarters in Central London.

Applications in full containing details of past experience and three referees should be made to the Trust by 20 January. Interviews will be held in early February. A job description is available from and applications should be made to:

Mrs Margaret Matthews, Secretary
National Birthday Trust Fund
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FEMALE COMPANION, Spanish speaking, wanted by retired medical doctor, for 4 months tour of Costa Rica's Nature Reserve. All expenses paid. Box 7289.

FRIENDLY MALE, 38, seeks attractive female, 25-30, for enjoyable evenings out and weekends away. Own flat, car, etc. SW London. Photo appreciated. Genuine. Box 7302.

GOOD LOOKING, genuine woman, would like to meet interesting, witty (as she is sometimes) man in 50-60 age bracket, for occasional but on-going pleasures. Box 7249.

HEY YOU, smiling, caring, gentle female, this sexy shy guy, 52, seeks for keeps a leap year lover. Come to Scotland and make footprints on my chunk of paradise. Let's plan the making of memories. Box 7305.

HOMO SAPIENS, sapiens male, 34, slim, 6ft. 1in., seeks female (same sub species), tall(fish), c25-35, interested arts, sciences, music/opera, politics for intimate relationship, London area. Box 7290.

HOMOSEXUAL (23), London-based, dislikes 'gayness', left politics, intellectual interests, seeks like-minded man. Box 7297.

I (F., 45), would like to meet a man who is as lively, spontaneous, empathic, creative and sensuous as I am. And make him into a good friend. Box 7296.

LOVELY FEMININE semi-professional singer and intellectual, 38, wishes to meet loving and singing companion, for mutual life enrichment. London. Box 7280.

MALE, 36, keen on many types of water sports, wishes meet like-minded female, 20-40. Reading, Berks. Box 7291.

MAN, FORTIES, quiet, kind, seeks divorced, widowed, separated or single woman friend, 30-50, Sikh or Hindu, view permanent relationship. Children welcome but not essential. Box 7276.

MAN, 46, quiet, practical, non-smoking socialist, loves classical music, reading, walking, seeks similar woman, for long-term relationship, north London. Box 7307.

MATURE FEMALE socialist, 44, looking for someone to teach me how to live again, male 40-50, theatre, politics. Box 7293.

MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN suffering incurable physical pain, seeks penfriends with chronic pain. Object: mutual support in keeping cheerful. **NOT WANTED:** material help, religion, sex. Box 7299.

NEW YEAR, new beginnings. Bright (though not heavy intellectual), peppy, journalist lady, enjoys arts, scrabble, chess, walking, golf, and lazing in own lovely London home, seeks equally successful, solvent male companion for sharing outings and innings. Like me should be non-smoker and have glided past 50, but look 'a million', (dollars, not years!). Photo and 'phone number appreciated. Box 7278.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, young 50, attractive! Wishes to meet slim, intelligent, radical woman, 30-45, to share interests (London area), music (jazz/classical), countryside. Photo please. Box 7294.

PROGRESSIVE, LONDON businessman, 50s, tall, widely travelled and interested in many fields, would like to meet interesting and intelligent female for company, possibly holidays. Box 7306.

35-YEAR-OLD gentleman, single, 6ft. 3in., slim and attractive, Oxford graduate, kind and gentle, welcomes replies from tall, attractive lady graduates. Box 7275.

UNATTACHED MALE University teacher, 40s, would like to meet articulate, intelligent, professional female, mid-late 30s, sense of humour, interested in music, theatre, travel, sport. London area. Box 7295.

UNATTACHED MANCHESTER teacher, seeks feminine companion, 35-48, for mutual fulfilment. Box 7308.

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WORKING CLASS socialist man, 30s, unemployed, single, Lancs. Nothing special, not academic, enjoys simple things, pro-feminist, gentle, seeks unpretentious, socialist woman companion. Box 7277.

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LISTINGS

FRI 6 JANUARY

LONDON First Anglo-Argentine musical collaboration since end of Falklands/Malvinas war. Peter Thomas, violin and Tomas Tichauer, viola play Mozart. 7.30pm St George's Church, Hanover Sq, W1.

LONDON 'No! to Apartheid Conscription! Support South African War Resisters!' Picket South African Embassy, Trafalgar Sq, 1-2pm. **Org Committee on South African War Resistance BM Box 2190, London, WC1N 3XX. 01-278 6928.**

SAT 7 JANUARY

LONDON 'Orwell and 1984 – Prophesy, Fantasy and Fact'. 3pm Rowland Hilder's Studio, 7 Kidbrooke Grove, Blackheath. Spkr Ronald Mallone. **Org Fellowship Party, Woolacombe House, 141 Woolacombe Rd, SE3 8QP. 01-856 6249.**

LONDON 'Global Aggression – US gambles with world peace' Study Conf, 10-5.30pm County Hall, SE1. Adm Free. **Org Liberation, 313/5 Caledonian Rd, N1. 01-607 0465.**

SUN 8 JANUARY

LONDON ANC Public Meeting. 2pm Westminster Cathedral Hall, Ambrosden Ave, SW1. Spkrs from ANC, SWAPO, AAM. **Org African National Congress, PO Box 38, 28 Penton St, N1 9PR.**

LONDON MAPAM Meeting with Prof Rafael Givon 'Egypt in Israel' – archaeology (slides). 8pm 37 Broadhurst Gdns, NW6. **Details: 01-328 2554.**

MON 9 JANUARY

LONDON 'Novels of the 2nd World War' Spkr Ken Worpole. History Workshop seminar, 7.30pm Wheatsheaf, Rathbone Pl, W1.

LONDON Classes begin at Working Men's College, Crowndale Rd, NW1. incls Jeremy Seabrook & Trevor Blackwell on 'Socialism and the Working Class' (7pm Tues). **Details: 01-387 2037.**

LONDON Short practical course on: Handling the media; Producing publicity; Poster and banner design, etc. for non-professionals. 12-wk course, 1 eve per wk. Fees: £8-£12/£1 unwaged. **Enrol today at Community Education Unit, London College of Printing, Elephant and Castle, SE1. Details: Mary Chamberlain, 01-735 9100/8484 x 264.**

LONDON Short practical course on community radio for non-professionals. 12 weeks, 1 eve per wk. £8-£12/£1 unwaged. Enrol today at Community Education Unit, London College of Printing, Elephant & Castle, SE1. **Details: Mary Chamberlain 01-735 8484 x 264.**

TUES 10 JANUARY

LONDON 'Housing in Lewisham' meeting, 7.30pm Labour Club, Limes Hall, Limes Grove, SE13. Creche. **Details: Margaret 852 4391 x38, Dermot 854 8888 x3763, Lucy 692 3981.**

WED 11 JANUARY

LEWES Bruce Kent and Tim Rathbone MP debate, 8pm Priory Lower School. **Org Lewes CND, Kate Martin Lewes 77324.**

LONDON 'The Politics of Persuasion', Lecture Series at Dunamis, St James's, Piccadilly. 6.30pm Peter Fiddick, TV Columnist, *Guardian*, 'The Media gets the Message'. **Details: Dunamis 197 Piccadilly, London W1. 01-437 6851.**

THURS 12 JANUARY

LONDON 'Going naked into the Conference Chamber? – Britain and Nuclear Weapons' – course begins at Clapham-Battersea AEI, Bonneville Site, Bonneville Gdns, SW4. 7.30-9.30pm for six weeks. Registration today at 7pm at Bonneville. **Details: Harry Zutshi 01-675 1913 eves/01-633 9434 day.**

LONDON Employment and Training for the Future Workshops to be run by Women's Comm. Support Unit of the GLC. **Details: Joan Miller 01-633 1115.**

LONDON Gay Humanist Grp 'Notable Gay Humanists' series. Dr Stephen Coote (ed *Penguin Book of Homosexual Verse*) on John Addington Symonds. 7.30pm Library, Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, WC1.

FORTHCOMING

14 JAN LEEDS 'Changing women's lives 1780-1850' day school University of Leeds Adult Education Centre. Spkrs Catherine Hall, Angela John. Fee £4. **Details: AEC, The University, Leeds LS2 9JT. Leeds 434874.**

14 JAN LONDON Privatisation of Britain's industries, one day conf convened by Post Office Engineering Union. 10am-4.30pm Central Hall, Westminster. **Details and credentials: Len Gillard 01-998 2981.**

16 JAN LONDON 'Smash the Show Trials!' Picket Old Bailey EC4. 12-2pm. **Org Irish Solidarity Movement.**

16 JAN LONDON 'Leadership and succession in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and China' – a series of seminars 5pm Rm 330, North Block (3rd Flr), Senate House, Univ of London, Malet St, WC1. **Details: 01-637 4934.**

16 JAN LONDON 'Public Transport in Peril' to discuss the implications of Government's transport policies for London. Adm free. 7.30pm Friends House, Euston Rd, NW1. **Org: Friends of the Earth, 377 City Road, EC1. 01-837 0731.**

16 JAN NOTTINGHAM 'Can Political Power be Morally justified? Spkr Prof David Beetham, Univ of Leeds. 4.15pm Social Science Bld, University of Nottingham. **Details: John Ferris for Nottingham Peace Lectures, 0602 56101 x3377.**

17 JAN MANCHESTER 'Animal Liberation – a socialist issue?' Spkr M. Killian, Northern Animal Liberation League, 7.30pm Polytechnic Students Union, Sidney St (off Oxford Rd), Manchester 10. **Details: BSSR, 9 Poland St, London, W1. 01-437 2728.**

17 & 19 JAN LONDON No-nonsense Economics – a down to earth exposition of how the economy works. One evening per week 7pm, either Tues or Thurs. Fee £12 for 12-week term. **Prospectus and Details: 01-834 4979. ESSRA School of Economic Studies, 177 Vauxhall Bridge Road, SW1.**

18 JAN LONDON 'Gender, health and medical care: a cross-cultural perspective'. Course organised by extra mural dept. University of London. Starts today. **Details: 01-359 4925 or Mary Ward Centre 01-831 7711, quoting course number 193UE.**

18 JAN WARWICK 'Can Law control the use of Force' Tom Campbell, Prof of Jurisprudence, University of Glasgow, 7.30pm Arts Centre Conference Room, University of Warwick. Adm Free.

18 JAN LONDON Alan Brownjohn reads his poetry. 8pm. Adm £1 at door. Kensington Bookshop, 140 Church St, W8. **Details: Robert Greacen, 01-229 4898.**

18 JAN LONDON Dannie Abse reads his poetry, 7.30pm. Adm £1 at door (membs/OAPs 50p). Coffee bar. Pentonville Gallery, 47 Lambs Conduit St, WC1. **01-242 8629.**

18 JAN LONDON 'The Creative Artist as Public Employee' Brian Yale, Resident artist and environmental designer for GLC. Adm free. 1pm Lower Hall, Bishopsgate Inst, 230 Bishopsgate, EC2.

20 JAN LONDON Housing Benefit – one year on. Conf jointly org by Child Poverty Action Grp and SHAC. 10am-4.45pm Central Hall, Westminster. Spkrs incl Rhodes Boyson, David Donnison, Paul Burgess, Nick Raynsford. Fee £6. **Details: Alan Booth, CPAG, 1 Macklin St, WC2. 01-242 3225.**

20 JAN LONDON First showing of 'A suitable job for a woman' by Chris Petit 1981. 7.30pm Labour Club, Deptford and Lewisham. **Details: Rex Badher 01-691 4896.**

21 JAN LONDON 'Alternatives to 1984' one-day conf org Quaker Peace and Service 10-5 Large Meeting House, Friends House, Euston Rd, NW1. £3/£1.50 unwaged and children. Tea, coffee snacks may be purchased. Pre-registration of children essential, full childrens' programme available. Creche for under 5s. **Details and booking: Patricia Sparks, Home Organisation Section, QPS, Friends Hs, Euston Rd, NW1 2BJ.**

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WOMEN AND MENTAL HEALTH are holding an open planning meeting at AWP, Hungerford House, Victoria Embankment, on Wednesday, 11 January, 1984, at 7.30pm. Any interested women very welcome. Access for disabled women, but please phone AWP on 01-836 6081 for details.

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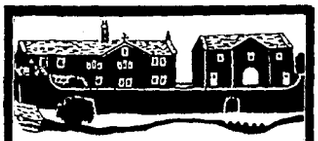

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PENTONVILLE GALLERY, 47 Lambs Conduit Street, London WC1, 01-242 8629. 9-12 Jan 'From Edge to Edge' – photographs of the Welsh Landscape by Paul Joyce. Presented in association with the Welsh Arts Council. Tues-Fri, 11am-6.30pm. Sats 11am-2pm. GLC funded, financially assisted by GLAA.

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The Poetry Society

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT AWARD

The 1984 award will be given for a collection of poetry (of at least 20 poems or 400 lines) published during the calendar year 1983. The judges will be Fleur Adcock and Marina Warner. Special consideration is given to the work of newly-emerging poets.

Poets and their publishers are invited to send, by 31 January, 1984, two copies of any publication for consideration.

The Alice Hunt Bartlett Award has been generously assisted by the Arts Council of Great Britain

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